

THE FAMILY AND SOCIAL WORK

EDWARD T. DEVINE

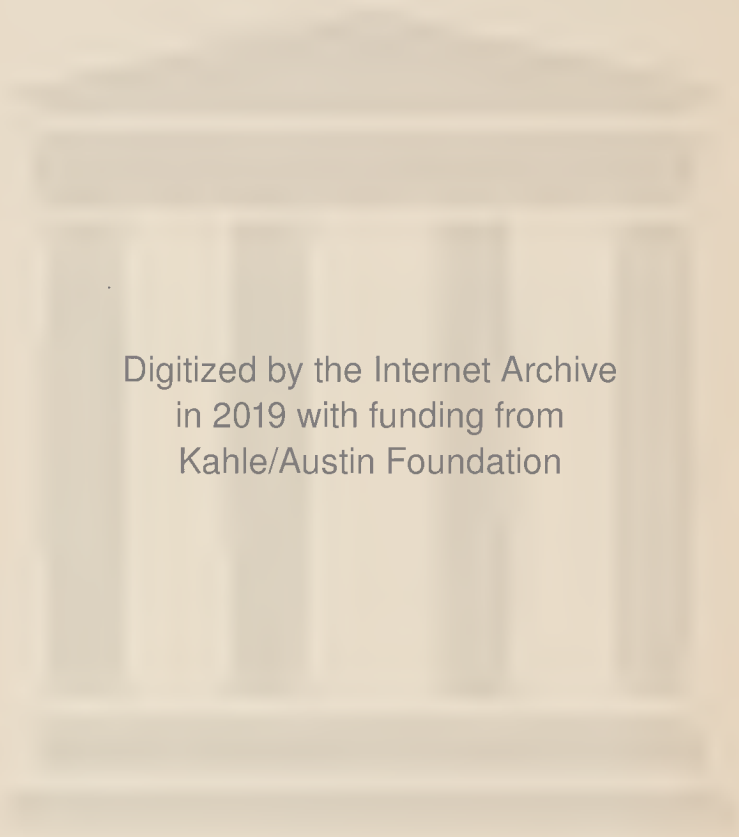
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THE FAMILY AND SOCIAL WORK



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THE FAMILY AND SOCIAL WORK

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I

THE APPEAL OF SOCIAL WORK

This volume is written to make clear the essentially religious character of social work and to emphasize its emotional appeal. Two contrasting doctrines, based upon radically different views of degeneration and progress, are presented for our consideration. One view is that the crime, misery and dependence with which we are familiar are due to a bad ancestry, that they are in the blood and are to be eliminated only by the natural operation of a severe struggle for existence and for advantage. The other view is that we have created and are creating the abnormal and the subnormal, by our greed, stupidity and neglect; that protection of the weak and the reintegration of those who are failures are the natural means of progress. The one policy is that of elimination; the other, that of redemption. The one social ideal is that we are to get rid of the lower types by the process of natural and artificial selection, and that the more rapidly this is accomplished the better. The other ideal

is that we are not to get rid of them but to save and transform them. War, pestilence and famine are among the recognized agents of natural selection. Unrestrained competition, monopoly and exploitation are more civilized aspects of the same great principle. Disease, alcoholism, insanitary housing, congestion of population, overwork under the speeding process, child labor, the industrial employment of women, and other like agencies are supposed to continue the beneficent process. This kind of evolutionary philosophy says: Let people go; nature is careless of the individual and seeks only the creation of the higher type; let us trust nature. Religion and philanthropy, however, have never been converted to this idea. Human nature is not careless of the individual, but infinitely concerned about him. Those who are capable of emotion have never been willing to let people go to destruction. Not elimination but rehabilitation, reintegration and redemption are the religious watchwords and they are the watchwords of that social ideal which we have put into contrast with that of elimination.

Thus we are face to face at once with a great issue. Within it lies the fundamental religious problem of our time. It is not a trivial ques-

tion, but one fraught with tremendous consequences; not a little problem, but a big one. It is the doctrine of the superman, as against the doctrine of brotherhood; the policy of crushing the weaker members of society, or that of saving and reincorporating them. What we are seeking is a principle of action in our relations with the handicapped, with the exploited, with backward races, with immigrants, with all those who, in a word, present distinctive social problems. Shall the defective, the incapable, the unsocial and anti-social classes be left to support themselves as best they can, without human sympathy or effective direction, with a miserable little bonus at the end to prevent actual starvation, and imprisonment or death as a means of social protection; or shall they receive generous support and definite control when that is necessary, under conditions which will develop their strength and their capacity for self-control? If we feel that there is a lack of resources to care for all those who cannot adequately care for themselves, shall we fall back upon a crude but comfortable doctrine of evolution, taking shelter behind the thought that privation and suffering are, in any case, beneficial to other people; or shall we increase our energy, develop our resources, secure the

necessary revenues, and provide those fair and reasonable opportunities which alone justify reliance upon the beneficial results of struggle? Shall we become callous, indifferent to good and evil, or shall we open the emotional flood-gates of our being and reaffirm the brotherhood of men?

In the course of such a discussion we shall obviously come immediately into contact with two distinct sciences: biology and economics. From the first come the laws of physical life, the principles governing the inheritance and development of traits and characteristics. From the second come the laws of wealth and of "illth," the principles governing the relations between conscious efforts to satisfy wants and the standard of living which results from such efforts. The one science regards man as an inheriting and developing individual, starting with inborn traits and acted upon by environmental influences. The other science looks upon man as having certain needs, wants, ambitions, desires; as furnished by nature and by society with certain materials, instruments and institutions capable of satisfying those desires when appropriate use is made of them; and is interested primarily in this use. Economy means management, in this case the dis-

covery of the most efficient means of utilizing natural and social assets for the most complete satisfaction of the varied wants of man.

The laws of life and of wealth-producing activity are complementary. They can hardly come into conflict. That which insures the highest and best-endowed life, the most harmonious adjustment between man and his environment, as biology conceives it, should naturally secure also the best industrial organization and the most equitable distribution of wealth. On the other hand, that which insures to human beings the most complete and rational satisfaction of their recognized needs should also secure the conservation and perpetuity of the highest traits and characteristics of the race. Perhaps these propositions might not easily be established solely on rationalistic grounds, or demonstrated like a mathematical theorem. They are true if there is an overruling power which makes for righteousness and harmony in man's universe. Biologists and economists, being human, may differ; a true biology and a sound economics should be in accord.

Social work happens to have had its origin mainly in economics. Its earliest problems have had to do primarily with the economic

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aspect of things. The relief of distress, the organization of charity, the protection of children, the improvement of housing, the prevention of infectious disease, and numerous other kinds of practical social work have been undertaken and advocated by people who were more or less familiar with economic ideas. They have been impressed with the waste and hardships involved in the conditions with which they have had to deal. Tuberculosis, for example, the particular disease against which the most completely organized social movement has been directed, is a disease mainly of the active working period. It is most fatal in early adult life, when the earning power of industrial workers is normally at the maximum. It is relatively a chronic disease entailing heavy expenses and a long period of involuntary dependence on others. For these and other like reasons, the disease results in an appalling amount of poverty and distress. Moreover, its treatment requires well-ventilated rooms, substantial nourishment, and other things which can readily be supplied if there is adequate income, but are often beyond the reach of the poor. Thus, in almost every aspect of the campaign against tuberculosis which has been brought to public attention, the

economic element is predominant. What is true of tuberculosis is only in less degree true of the other diseases, the prevalence of which has led to one or another form of social work. For a century teachers of political economy and writers on economic questions have dealt with adverse living and working conditions—not always, perhaps, with equal emphasis upon the human as distinct from the material elements in the economic process, and yet usually with an eye upon the maximum satisfaction of human wants as the ultimate goal. Economists have advocated social reforms, but they have also been trenchant critics of proposals for social reform. They have been quick to discover unfavorable consequences of particular laws or measures which had been proposed from some humanitarian motive, but which ignored or ran counter to some fundamental economic principle. Even when their objections were finally overborne by a higher and more convincing logic, this criticism has been on the whole beneficial. Social workers have learned to count the cost of their enterprises, have found that temporary hardship is sometimes more than compensated by later and permanent gain, have come to prefer a “work bench” philosophy of life to a “pig trough”

philosophy,¹ have frankly adopted the idea that the development of strength is a nobler ideal than the mere increase of comfort.

Social workers and economists have thus in a general way come to terms. There is no fundamental opposition between them. Individual economists may seek to prove and, indeed, may succeed in proving, that a particular plan enthusiastically advocated by reformers will not accomplish the good results claimed for it, or that, if it does, the expense in perhaps unforeseen directions will prove disproportionate. But such calculations are merely a wholesome corrective, or, more accurately, an essential preliminary, to the working out of any well-considered plan. Again, individual economists, approaching a question from the point of view of a particular class, while admitting the benefits likely to be gained by other classes or by the community as a whole from a particular measure, may still insist that its effects on the distribution of wealth are objectionable. In this instance, the economist is merely the advocate of a party and is no safe guide for those who are considering the common welfare. Speaking generally, economic writers and teachers do approach the subjects

1 Carver: *The Religion Worth Having*, p. 35.

which they discuss from the point of view of the general welfare, and their criticism of social legislation, social reforms and humanitarian undertakings is sympathetic and beneficial. Social workers equally, having profited by such discussion and recognizing that their measures must have a sound basis in economics, often anticipate and, in any event, give respectful heed to such criticism, as, of course, they profit by the sympathy and support which their measures receive in economic writings and discussions.

With biologists, on the other hand, social workers have hardly yet reached such an understanding. It is almost as if they spoke a different language. When biologists begin to pay attention to such kinds of social work as the relief of distress and the clearing out of the slums, it is often for the purpose of protesting that such efforts are running counter to natural laws, that they are interfering with natural or a sound artificial selection, keeping alive the unfit, perpetuating a race of weaklings. When they turn to workmen's compensation laws and legislation to protect children from premature employment, it is, again, not to express sympathy and approval, but to point out that such legislation is apt to have

extraordinary consequences of which its promoters have not dreamed: such as that large employers, where employers' liability laws are enforced, may prefer to employ single men who do not have families dependent upon them, thus discouraging breeding by industrious, regularly employed men;² and that when children are not permitted to be employed for wages, parents will not take such good care of their infants, not being able to look forward to their becoming wage-earners early in life, thus again interfering with a natural and desirable breeding process.³ Social workers, on their part, when they first get a glimmering of the importance of heredity, are apt to rush to extreme positions which any competent biologist would at once recognize as unwarranted. Not having had long-continued, persistent and sympathetic criticism from those who are familiar with the laws of life and growth, and not having been accustomed to revise their plans in the light of such criticism, social workers are apt merely to divide into two camps: one standing staunchly by the social workers' program in defiance of this new

2 Kellicott: *Social Direction of Human Evolution*, p. 211.

3 These ideas appear to originate in the Eugenics Laboratory of London and like other generalizations of a similar kind to rest upon singularly slight scientific foundation.

and rather hostile attack; and the other capitulating unconditionally and losing faith in any reform measures which merely affect the lives of the passing generation. No doubt, in due time a more stable equilibrium will be found. Biologists will either follow the lead of certain extreme representatives of the eugenics⁴ philosophy in repudiating all humanitarian effort, except that which is directed toward the outright elimination of the unfit and the selective breeding of higher types—in which case they will have at best only a very one-sided influence; or they will approach various kinds of social work in a more discriminating and sympathetic spirit, testing all things in their crucible, as the economists have done, encouraging and approving the measures which make for a fuller and richer life, showing even in these things just how incidental evil results may be avoided and the maximum good accomplished. Social workers, instead of being unduly disturbed by the dictum, and especially the obiter dictum, of the biologist, will seek such information and training as will enable them to reach sound judgments from the bio-

4 Eugenics is defined as the science of the improvement of the human race by better breeding. Eugenics has to do with traits that are in the blood, the protoplasm. Davenport: *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics*, p. 1.

logic as from the economic point of view. Probably very little of that which has aroused the enthusiasm of social workers will be found really subversive of the principles of life and growth. Probably very little in the adverse conditions which have most aroused the social conscience will be found genuinely favorable to the survival of higher types. Science, whether in biology or in economics, seeks only truth. If the truth which science reveals condemns that which is done even from the best of motives, the condemnation from the scientific point of view must stand. But sympathy for those who suffer and a yearning for social justice have been a long time in the world. The exponent of social work, which is the modern expression of these ancient human instincts, may stand unmoved when spokesmen of the new science become too arrogant and patronizing, and may at least ask to take a second look at the critics' credentials as having the right to speak the last word on behalf of his science.

The fact is, that social work, while welcoming support and criticism from both economic and biologic science, is something more and better than applied biology or applied economics. It is fundamentally applied religion.

Primarily its concern is to seek and to save those who are lost, to rescue those who are perishing of privation and neglect. We who are strong are to bear the burdens of the weak, even if in so doing we go down together. We do not expect to go down, but if that should be the last word of a current biology, we can only say in reply: Here we stand, we cannot do otherwise. A community in which the strong deliberately crush the weak for the sake of having still stronger descendants does not appear to us worth saving. We have another scale of values. We have heard the words eternal life, and to us also they mean not extension, but content. Better a few generations of men who recognize their brotherhood, than cycles of generations of supermen each ruthlessly stamping out the defenseless or keeping them alive only to minister to the strong.

Again, to the pseudo-economist who warns us that our humanitarian zeal is all very well in its place but that the money available for it is very limited, and that we must go slow for fear of bankruptcy, we say with equal deliberation and steadfastness: We have another scale of values. Count your bank clearings and foreign exchanges if you will.

Attach as much importance as you like to the output of mills and the value of agricultural produce. But what concerns us is the death rate, the character test, the public health, the vigor and happiness of the population, the character of its social institutions, the standard of living. We deny that it is sound policy to make sure first, at all hazards, of a large output and a profit, regardless of the cost in lives, health and character; and to be content with only so much of these latter goods—which to us appear to be the real good—as we may be able to purchase from the surplus of industry. Efficiency in production we rank high; but no production is efficient which does not conserve the life, health and morals of its workers. Cheap and abundant products are most desirable. But a true measure of cost takes account of the conditions under which goods are produced and brought to market. It is not entirely from savings that bad housing and infectious disease are to be combated. We are to keep our dwellings and our public health what they should be as we go along. If our kind of economics is right, this will have a favorable influence on output and profits, but if not, then let them shrink. In a rational scale of economic values, decent housing for workers

and the prevention of disease are typical, not of luxuries to be enjoyed when we can afford them, but of necessities to be assured first of all from the undivided product of industry.

Social workers like others have need of humility and teachableness. From many quarters they will find helpful advice and beneficial criticism. Biology and economics have been especially cited because they have a direct and fundamental relation to most of the problems of social work. That relation is one which social workers have every reason for emphasizing and understanding. Superficial criticism from any source we may disregard, but only on condition that we have a more secure foundation for our faith. That foundation exists in the religious conception of the infinite value of the individual, in the obligation to love our neighbors as ourselves, in the sense of brotherhood which rises to a recognition of God as not merely a first cause and a moral ruler, but as a father, with whom to be reconciled is to fulfil the inmost law of our being. When this personal relation to the universe has been clearly established, the nature of our responsibility for those who are in trouble becomes forever clearly defined. We come to care for the unfortunate defective girl, not

primarily because she may become the mother of illegitimate children who will in turn become public charges, prostitutes and criminals, but for her own sake, as one who needs all our sympathy and our tenderest care. It is not so much that healthy stocks are to be protected from her taint, as that she is to be protected from criminal assault. She is our handicapped sister, a daughter of man, not less but more certain of our warm human sympathy because of her affliction. All that biology has to say is to be taken into account in her interest. All that economics has to teach as to the effect of having her in one environment rather than in another, of taking her out of an industrial competition for which she is not fitted and supporting her from the surplus of society, even of the need for working a little harder and utilizing the resources of nature a little more intelligently in order that we may be able to care for her properly—these things we take gratefully into account. But they do not furnish the original and strongest motive. That comes from our religion, from our inherited and trained instinct of love and compassion, from our instinct for justice, our inbred passion for fair play and decency. We care for the blind—not as constituting a dependent

class, from whom there is danger to be feared for the race, or grudgingly, as if the obligation deprived us of some pleasure to which we have a right; but as we would care for a blind young brother, from affection and pride. Certainly we would not insist on doing for him what he can better do for himself. We would not deprive him of opportunity for development, self-expression and self-direction. But neither would we allow him to suffer needlessly for his infirmity, and if that is involved we would gladly work a little longer each day to secure for him an income essentially equivalent to our own. This is the religious attitude toward those who are sick, who hunger, who are in prison. And this is the attitude of social work.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER I

1. Discover or formulate the best possible definition of (1) biology, (2) eugenics, (3) economics, (4) standard of living, (5) social work, (6) religion.

2. Distinguish between abnormal and subnormal.

3. What is the "struggle for existence"? Is it an improvement on this conception to

have it include or be supplemented by the idea of "struggle for advantage"?

4. Is the "struggle for existence and for advantage" in human society one between individuals or between groups?

5. Do you consider that drunkenness, prostitution, crime and pauperism are due mainly to "bad blood," or to "bad conditions"? Prepare a brief in support of your view.

6. Is "elimination" or "redemption" the more rational social policy? Make as strong a statement as you can in behalf of the former.

7. If people must be supported by others, should that support be given under severe conditions or under generous conditions? If the latter, how will you prevent imposition and injury to character?

8. What is a "pig trough philosophy"? Can you substitute a name for it which will make it appear less odious, or even attractive to high-minded people?

9. Have we sufficient economic resources to care adequately for all the mentally defective? How should we care for them?

10. What is the doctrine of "the superman" and who has been its exponent? Can you reconcile the conception of a "superman" with that of "social service"?

THE FAMILY

II

THE FAMILY

Of the value of the family as a social institution it is scarcely necessary to give here the evidence. An exquisite statement has been made by Helen Bosanquet:¹

The pain of life is hallowed by it, the drudgery sweetened, its pleasures consecrated. It is the great trysting-place of the generations, where past and future flash into the reality of the present. It is a great storehouse in which the hardly earned treasures of the past, the inheritance of spirit and character from our ancestors, are guarded and preserved for our descendants. And it is the great discipline through which each generation learns anew the lesson of citizenship that no man can live for himself alone.

The economic importance of the family has won tardy and even yet incomplete recognition. Professor Marshall indeed insists that economists have always given a prominent place to the unselfish sacrifices which men make in order to secure comfortable provision for their families—family affection being distinguished

¹ *The Family*, p. 342.

from other benevolent and self-sacrificing motives by the fact that it acts with so much uniformity in any given stage of civilization that its effects can be systematically observed, reduced to law and measured.² Professor Patten goes much further in connecting our subject fruitfully with economic science. "Family life," he says, "is the physical complement of social conditions in a way that no other human arrangement can be; but it may become imperfect by a hardening of its forms, and man's reaction to nature may be so incomplete that marriage operates to sustain the miseries of poverty rather than to overcome them in correspondence with its first functions."³ Professor Patten looks forward to the rise of a normal industrial group which will replace alike the aristocracies which are being shorn of their powers, and the poor who are thronging into unnatural dwelling places—both of which he looks upon as crumbling bodies. Eventually "the line of social stability will be the line of family continuity and there will cease to be an upper and a lower class, checking progress by their dissensions. The one enduring institution will be the family, and it

2 Principles of Economics, Vol. I, second ed., p. 77.

3 New Basis of Civilization, p. 48.

will be protected by income and ennobled by service."⁴

Whether it is conceived from the static point of view of the two quotations from English writers, or from the dynamic point of view of the American economist who is considering the changing character of the very basis of our new civilization, the family is obviously the fundamental social institution, a determining factor in economic welfare and prosperity. Biology and economics join hands with poetry and religion in exalting the family to a first place among human institutions. To protect the family from disintegration and decay is the surest way to safeguard the state. All kinds of social work may be described in terms of family welfare. All kinds of anti-social influences may be measured by their untoward effects on family life. As the individual members of the family attain to a higher and more perfect social life, this is reflected in their relations one to another. Schools, clubs, playgrounds, hospitals and other institutions outside the family may be most necessary and most beneficial; but if so they will in the long run strengthen and add zest to the family circle. The saloon, the gambling house and

4 New Basis of Civilization, p. 63.

the disorderly house may show their destructive character in other more direct ways, but in the end the full extent of their harm to society is most plainly visible in the broken homes and the unhappy families for which they are responsible.

To maintain normal family life, to restore it when it has been interfered with, to create conditions more and more favorable to it, is thus the underlying object of all our social work. Efforts to relieve distress and to improve general conditions are shaped by our conception of what constitutes normal family life.

The charity organization movement has been more conscious of this influence than have most other social movements. From its very beginning general methods and policies of charitable relief have been adopted or rejected according to their probable effect on family standards, and it has become an axiom that each individual who is in need of assistance must be considered in his family setting if he is to be helped effectively. In other kinds of social work this consideration may not have been so consciously asserted and so definitely formulated as a fundamental principle, but there is none in which it cannot be clearly dis-

cerned as an actuating motive. City planning and housing make their appeal largely because they determine to such an extent the kind of homes we may have. The strongest argument for the prevention of tuberculosis is that this disease, more than any other, breaks up families at the most critical period in their development, after draining their resources and undermining their physical vitality. Our obsolete method of dealing with industrial accidents is becoming intolerable because we are coming to realize that it throws the whole burden of the accident on the family of the injured workman, with disastrous consequences. It is in the interest of the family that we are insisting that girls and women be protected from overwork and strain in factories and shops and that children be withdrawn altogether from industry; that the working day of men be not so long that it leaves neither time nor strength for the other parts of life; that boys and girls be educated for efficiency as fathers and mothers, which implies efficiency as producers and as consumers; that opportunities for recreation be such that wholesome social intercourse shall be promoted and degrading influences be eliminated; that men's earning power and their wages be adjusted to the cost

of maintaining a normal standard of living for a family, not to the needs of a single man in a low-grade lodging house, to the end that the burden of the support of their families may not fall upon the women and children and thus be transferred from the strong to the weak.

A right view of the importance of sound and healthy family life can be obtained only in the long perspective of history.⁵ Our modern monogamous family represents the survival of religious, ethical, economic and legal elements from all the intermingling streams which unite to make the civilization of which it is a part. Hebrew, Roman, Teuton, and others more remote or more collateral, have made their several contributions. Even when the features of the institution as it was found in different peoples are more striking for their uniformity than for their diversity, these common origins only emphasize the very antiquity and the persistence of the content which we associate with the conception of the family. Unalterable it is not, but well established and not lightly to be cast aside or changed, the family may certainly claim to be. Biology and economics, as we have seen, both find a need for marital and

⁵ Bosanquet: *The Family*. Howard: *Matrimonial Institutions*.

parental affection, for family loyalty, for a recognition of the elementary mutual obligations of the family tie.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER II

1. Why is the family the ultimate social unit?

2. Contrast the patriarchal with the modern ethical family.

3. What are the reasonable limits of the claims of collateral relatives as members of the family?

4. Is it advantageous or not that one should be completely identified with cousins, second cousins, etc.?

5. How should society deal with able-bodied, intelligent persons who neglect their obligation to support and care for young dependent children, aged dependent parents or grandparents, a destitute aunt or mother-in-law?

6. Do you know of instances in which absorption in church affairs leads to neglect of family duties?

7. Should the "living wage" be one which will support the individual or the family? If

the latter, do you mean that there should be only one wage-earner in a family?

8. Is it true that standards of living are high or low according as income is earned by the male head of the family, or on the other hand, made up of the composite earnings of man, wife and children?

9. Under what circumstances should a wife be expected to earn an income?

10. Are young children to be looked upon as an economic burden or as an asset?

THE BIOLOGIC BASIS



III

THE BIOLOGIC BASIS

Family life must have first of all a sound basis in heredity. A man should be very careful, as Heine warns us, in the selection of his parents. Sir Thomas Browne in stately seventeenth century language contrasted heredity and environment to the disparagement of the latter in the exhortation:¹

Bless not thyself that thou wert born in Athens; but among thy multiplied acknowledgments, lift up one hand to heaven that thou wert born of honest parents, that modesty, humility and veracity lay in the same egg, and came into the world with thee.

This fact of heredity is one of which social workers must take account. *Like begets like*, or, more accurately stated, *Like tends to beget like*. *Blood will tell*. *You cannot make a silk purse from a sow's ear*. *Some children are born good just as some are born strong*. *The education of a child should begin with its grandparents*. These proverbs and others of like import have undoubtedly a solid basis in observation and experience. If the reader will more closely scrutinize these sayings, all of which seem to be of the same general import,

¹ Quoted in Thomson's *Heredity*, p. 248.

he will notice that the last in regard to the education of grandparents has a slightly different implication from the others, and on this slight difference a great deal of the current discussion about heredity depends. In saying that we should derive advantage from the education of our grandparents, it is obviously assumed that they will transmit the results of that education to their children, who, as our parents, will again transmit those results, further enhanced by their own education, to us. This is the theory of Lamarck, but it is opposed to the more widely accepted current theory of heredity associated with the name of Weissmann, that acquired characters are not transmitted. Important as this question is from the point of view of the scientific explanation of heredity, it has less material bearing on our practical problems than might at first sight seem probable. Summing up his discussion of the subject, Thomson in his *Heredity*² says:

If there is little or no scientific warrant for our being other than extremely sceptical at present as to the inheritance of acquired characters—or better, the transmission of modifications—this scepticism lends greater importance than ever on the one hand, to a good “nature,” to secure which is the business of careful mating; and on the other hand to a good

"nurture" to secure which for our children is one of the most obvious and binding duties: the hopefulness of the task resting especially upon the fact that, unlike the beasts that perish, man has a lasting external heritage of ideas and ideals, embodied in prose and verse, in statue and painting, in cathedral and university, in tradition and convention, and above all in society itself.

Inasmuch as this external heritage would be modified by the education of grandparents and parents, it is well after all to begin the education of a child, as Holmes suggests, with his progenitors. The new science of eugenics is concerned, however, with a different matter from the modification of this external heritage. If acquired characters are not directly inherited it might not much matter whether it is one's own parents and grandparents or some other people of the former and preceding generation who are thus educated. Foster parents and neighbors might impart ideas and ideals to us nearly as well as, sometimes even better than, parents. In earliest infancy parents, especially the mother, may have an advantage in impressing traditions and conventions, but after all the individual may sooner or later come to share in the common social heritage in so far as he has the inborn "nature" which fits him to receive it. This "nature" itself, this

inborn character, this transmissible inheritance which his parents bequeath because they must, virtually as they in turn have received it from the generation which preceded them, is believed to be beyond the reach of modifying environmental influences. The individual may indeed be transformed by his own experience, by education and opportunity and habit. What he gives to his children, however, is not these transformations but the capacity for them, which he himself inherited. The ancestor, the living individual and the future offspring are all of one blood. The race may perish, but so long as it lives, it lives by virtue of a common inheritance. Save for the chronological sequence it would be as true to say that the parent inherits from the child as to say that the child inherits from the parent. They simply share in a common strain of inheritance. They are of one race.

This, again, however, is but a partial truth. The child is born not of one parent but of two. Male and female we are created, and though each can contribute to posterity only that which he has, it makes a great difference in what combination it is contributed. Breeding, which in human society normally takes place in the family, and for which, biologically, the

family exists, may continuously improve the stock. Unwise breeding may lead directly to racial degeneracy. There are now well-known laws formulating the observed conditions under which unit characters are transmitted.³ As yet these formulæ have a very limited applicability to human heredity, but it is believed that heredity in man will ultimately be sufficiently well understood to enable not only the simple unit character but complex human traits to be followed and reduced to general laws.⁴ How far our actual burden of pauperism, crime and disease are actually due to the perpetuation of degenerate breeds, and how far they are due to bad economic and social conditions which we could more quickly and directly affect by appropriate social action, is the open question to which reference was made in the first chapter. That this is mainly or entirely a problem of eugenics, to be solved by scientific breeding, is the view of such eugenists as Professor Charles Benedict Davenport, who says:

It is a reproach to our intelligence that we as a people, proud in other respects of our control of nature, should have to support about half a million

3 Bateson: *Mendel's Principles of Heredity*. Doncaster: Heredity, etc.

4 Kellicott: *Social Direction of Human Evolution*, p. 101.

insane, feeble-minded, epileptic, blind and deaf, 80,000 prisoners, and 100,000 paupers at a cost of over one hundred million dollars per year. A new plague that rendered four per cent of our population, chiefly at the most productive age, not merely incompetent but a burden costing one hundred million dollars yearly to support, would instantly attract universal attention. But we have become so used to crime, disease and degeneracy that we take them as necessary evils. That they were so in the world's ignorance is granted; that they must remain so is denied.⁵

The salvation of the race, according to this view, is to be accomplished through heredity. From the experience of animal and plant breeders it is inferred that "proper matings are the greatest means of permanently improving the human race—of saving it from imbecility, poverty, disease and immorality."⁶ "If we are to build up in America a society worthy of the species man, then we must take such steps as will prevent the increase or even the perpetuation of animalistic strains."⁷

There is much of this eugenics program with which social workers may sympathize and in which they should clearly cooperate. The permanent segregation, during the reproductive

5 Heredity in Relation to Eugenics, p. 4.

6 *Ib.*, p. 260.

7 *Ib.*, p. 263.

years of life, of the feeble-minded, the insane, the incorrigibly criminal, and the hopelessly ineffective, i.e., those who cannot through education and discipline be brought to a condition of self-support and normal self-direction, would enormously reduce the total social burden. Even if there were no such thing as heredity, this would be justified on economic grounds. Moreover, it would be more humane and enlightened than our present methods of partial support and inadequate control. Incapables and criminals are now supported by society in the most expensive and extravagant manner. To bring them into carefully planned and well-managed colonies where we could separate the improvable from the hopeless, and where we could accurately count the cost of their maintenance and forecast the probability of their reintegration, would require initial investment and for a time larger annual appropriations than we have been making. But the economy and wisdom of such investments would speedily become apparent. Numerous institutions of this kind are already in existence and others are under consideration. The indeterminate sentence is a recognition of the principle that professional criminals should not be allowed at large in society, but a more cour-

ageous application of the principle is necessary, and especially the establishment of hospitals or colonies in which moral imbeciles, incorrigible offenders whether technically defective or not, can be detained as long as they are dangerous to society—if necessary, for the whole of life.

In some states insane and feeble-minded persons, and those who have committed certain grave crimes, may legally be deprived by a surgical operation of the power of procreation. This, however, is a policy of very doubtful expediency, except in those cases where the health or welfare of the individual concerned will be conserved by such an operation. Social defense is fully protected by permanent segregation and even if this means greater expense, it seems likely to be preferred as more conservative and more consistent with that respect for life and personality which is so essential an element in modern civilization.

The demand that a physician's certificate shall be required as a condition of marriage has entire justification. Certain diseases and defects which have demonstrable hereditary consequences, like syphilis, insanity and feeble-mindedness, might properly be made a legal bar to marriage. Others, like tuber-

culosis should at least be fully known to the other contracting party to an engagement in order that responsible medical advice may be sought in time to avert the consequences of a dangerous alliance. Pending the securing of better legislation on the subject, the example of the ecclesiastical authorities of the Protestant Episcopal Cathedral in Chicago in refusing to solemnize a marriage except on the presentation of a clean bill of health from both the contracting parties is one which may well be emulated.

Another part of the eugenics program which we may heartily support is the demand for research into the facts about heredity. A state survey of defects and of their transmission from generation to generation would be most desirable. Largely through private initiative such a survey is already well advanced in the state of New Jersey.⁸ This work has been done by means of field workers attached to various institutions for defectives, and in other states similar beginnings have been made. The New York State Board of Charities has a bureau of eugenics, and a Eugenics Record Office is established at Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, in connection with a section of

8 Davenport: *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics*, p. 269.

the American Breeders Association, the purpose of which is to cooperate with institutions and state boards of control in each state for the study of defectives and criminalistic strains.

The problem of race rehabilitation, however, is not to be solved by better breeding alone. Protoplasm, carrying the inborn traits of the blood, is the basis of life but it is not the whole of life. The position that nothing is of fundamental social importance except what preserves or modifies this trait-carrying protoplasm is extreme and fallacious. That nothing is of permanent value to the race except what eliminates an undesirable strain, or perpetuates a healthy strain, or makes by combination a new and perhaps higher strain of transmissible germ plasm, is a fantastic and untenable idea, and one calculated, if widely accepted and seriously acted upon, to hamper some of the most useful and beneficent work now in progress for the fundamental and permanent improvement of the race.

No doubt there are strains of criminality, vagrancy and pauperism which are to be attributed to protoplasmic inheritance, and no doubt it is a duty to eliminate those strains by segregating those who have them in a

demonstrably transmissible degree, and thus to protect healthy blood from their contamination. The question is whether there is not far more apparent criminality, superficial vagrancy, and avoidable dependence which we are creating directly by our existing economic and social conditions, by our ineffectual educational system, by our obsolete police and penal machinery, by social causes which we can control if we will. No doubt we can in the end by attention to breeding make over to some extent the basic life stuff of the generations. But are we conserving, protecting and developing the manifold possibilities of the human material which even now comes into the world?

What would we say of a sculptor who, with Pentelic marble such as sufficed for Phidias, or the fine Carrara of a Michael Angelo at hand, should insist that no real progress towards the expression of beauty is possible until the quarrymen discover a stone without blemish or impurity? As the quarryman in his search is to the artist creating beauty from the best materials at hand, so is the reformer who searches for means of improving the race to those reformers, teachers, social workers, who take human nature as they find it and help to

create a higher standard, a nobler social order, a more successful community life from those materials.

And the material is not unworthy of the social worker's utmost zeal. What is wrong with most of those who are making shipwreck of their lives is not their remote ancestry, not their protoplasmic inheritance, not their inborn nature; but their home life, their education, their associations, the conditions under which they earn their living, the institutions under which they live, the obstacles which they encounter, the lack of a fair and reasonable opportunity, the lack of a motive which is intelligible and impelling, the lack of that adequate social control and encouragement to which the weaker members of a community of strong men are justly entitled.

Ever since the ancient Hebrews developed their lofty and ennobling national religion; ever since the Greeks demonstrated for all time the power in humanity to create the beautiful, in architecture, in statue, in the physically perfect body, and the well-disciplined mind; ever since the Romans shaped the instruments of orderly government and effective administration; ever since our Teutonic and English ancestors began to lay the foundations of

modern society, there has been convincing evidence everywhere of the possibilities of human nature. Those possibilities are for the most part undeveloped. The latent powers of men are not called into exercise. We are but just beginning to give continuous and intelligent direction to conscious efforts for human betterment. Not a new and higher type of man is the urgent and pressing need, but the control of anti-social traits, the encouragement of the higher qualities that are latent even now and of those that are clearly apparent to the discerning eye. Perhaps in the fulness of time a higher type of man will appear, but the immediate problem is greater equality of opportunity among men, more varied and appropriate opportunity, protection for the less mature and the exploited, restraint of the stronger who abuse their power.

"It is the democratic bringing of all up to the level of the best," as Professor Patten says, "and not the formation of new characters that should be the conscious aim of man. Nature will care for progress if men will care for reform."⁹

Our responsibility to foreign peoples, which is discussed from one point of view in John R.

⁹ *Heredity and Social Progress*, p. 191.

Mott's "Decisive Hour of Christian Missions," our responsibility to immigrants who come to live in America, and to the negroes whom our own ancestors brought here by force, our responsibility to all those who for any reason do not fully share in that degree of prosperity and in that type of civilization which are our heritage, thus becomes clear and is seen to be at one with our direct personal responsibility towards those who for any reason need our sympathy, our fraternal cooperation, and our personal help.

Social workers are not Utopians with gaze fixed upon some poet's vision. Fortunately here and there one may be that also. As social workers, however, we are rather concerned to see that our contemporaries—the men, women and children of our time—are able to realize the standards to which we have already attained.

A few paragraphs from the volume from which we have just quoted, expressing with extraordinary lucidity and force this social philosophy, may appropriately close this chapter:

Progress then is not the making of the strong, but that protection of the weak by which differentiation becomes possible. A forward movement can care for itself if the initial conditions are favorable, and

human efforts are of little avail in augmenting or in changing the direction of these forces. Strengthening the weak is not a final process, but one which must be repeated by each generation with ever increasing care. The strength of the strong is natural, that of the weak is acquired. The differentiation of powers is the outcome of natural processes; the movement towards equality must be nurtured. The exploitation of the weak by the strong and the dwarfing of feeble characters by the strong are the natural results of the pressure exerted by the strong.

A backward race or class need not be radically altered to fit it for civilization. Most of the changes come of themselves if the initial evils are removed. Give the class or the dwarfed character a surplus, and spontaneous changes will reorganize society. The initial step in progress is protection, and a flow of income from the strong to the weak.

An illustration is furnished by the changes in the immigrants to America. A few generations make them completely American, not because the conscious educational process has had sufficient power to do it, but because a few initial changes start a chain of natural causes which strengthen the strong individuals of the new classes and force their transformation into Americans. Two things are necessary for this: The presence of a growth-creating surplus and the existence of common emotions. The emotions of a race are not a natural inheritance due to growth but are a part of the social environment of its members, and act alike on all individuals under the stress of the emotions. Regeneration

results wherever the surplus permits growth and places the person in proper contact with his environment. Society, therefore, may expect these emotional changes to act upon every class which has gained the surplus on which growth and regeneration depend.

The development of a lower race—let us say the negroes in America—does not necessitate remaking the negro by an artificial process. Set free the series of natural changes, and the final results will take care of themselves. A surplus includes regeneration and new emotions, forces which will act and react until the whole class has been brought up to the level of its environment. Two races in one environment cannot be kept apart except by some exploitation that harms the weaker one of them. The amplest protection and a surplus-yielding discipline will stimulate the forces in a lower class which will ultimately raise them to the level of the highest. Each new discipline yields a new surplus which offers emotion and regeneration a fresh opportunity to evoke natural qualities. The more freely we give to the weak, the more is gained by the strong. The morality of similar men is embodied in the Golden Rule, but for dissimilar men the law of service is yet higher. Do unto those unlike yourself what they cannot do for themselves. Let your surplus energy go out through your natural character for the benefit of those who have it not.¹⁰

10 Patten: *Heredity and Social Progress*, pp. 183-186.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER III

1. Work out a clear definition of heredity. Compare your definition with that of some recognized biologist, e.g., J. Arthur Thomson.

2. Why is "like tends to beget like" a more accurate statement than "like begets like"? Do we usually qualify proverbs in the interests of literal accuracy?

3. Are acquired characters transmitted to offspring?

4. Do you attach more importance to nature or to nurture?

5. Enumerate the more important things which go to make up our "external heritage."

6. Enumerate some of the traits, good or bad, which you think are likely to be affected only or chiefly by breeding.

7. If the feeble-minded show a tendency to "survive," and to propagate more successfully than normal persons, does this indicate that they are especially "fit to survive" in the biologic sense?

8. Should marriage be made conditional on obtaining an official permit based on mental and physical examination? If not, should the requirement of a physician's certificate of health as a condition of solemnization of mar-

riage by the Church become a general practice? Is it desirable that the contracting parties should mutually offer and expect such a certificate without formal action by the state or by the Church?

9. Is the drunkard to be regarded mainly as a degenerate, as a patient affected by a curable disease, as a normal person of weak will, as a criminal offender, as a victim of exploitation by liquor interests, or in what other way?

10. Is it better to work for a "New Jerusalem on earth," or for the realization of those normal standards which are already accepted by the majority of the reasonable men of our time?

THE ECONOMIC BASIS

IV

THE ECONOMIC BASIS

The material basis of normal family life is income. On a farm this may be represented in part by the direct product of field and garden; but expressed generally in terms of modern industrial organization an adequate income means a living wage. The normal family may be said to consist of one wage-earner, a wife responsible for the management of the home and for the wise expenditure of income, and three or more children. There may of course be aged dependent members of the family, there may be older children of working age, the wife may be a wage-earner, instead of, or in addition to, the husband and wage-earning children, or the family may be childless. But the conception of a living wage relates to a full-grown man who is the breadwinner for a family, to a wife who is largely occupied in the rearing of children and in the making of a home, and to children who are not to become wage-earners prematurely. A family standard and not that of a homeless lodger is in question. A single source of income rather than one compounded

of wages earned by man, woman and children is assumed. Supplementary sources such as those from lodgers, from earnings of wife and children, and charitable gifts are to be regarded as abnormal, sometimes justified by the circumstances of particular families, but never to be accepted as ordinary and legitimate means of securing an income, as the standard and prevailing custom, to which wages may properly be adjusted. Much depends, therefore, upon wages. Are they high, regular, and earned under favorable conditions of labor? Then there is at least the possibility for a healthy and rational family life. Are they low, irregular, uncertain, and earned only at the cost of excessive hours, exhausting application, mind-destroying monotony, separation from family and deprivation of normal home life, or other unfavorable conditions? Then the effect on the family is obvious.

If, in a régime of economic freedom and enterprise, under the untrammelled operation of economic forces, workingmen can earn and obtain an adequate income for the support of their families, this is a healthy and most desirable situation.

Favorable conditions to this end are a relative abundance of capital seeking investment;

an abundance of land, mineral resources and natural power inviting exploitation; an adequate supply of the best modern machinery; and effective access to markets through cheap and quick transportation of goods. A relative scarcity of labor leads to competition among employers, and a relative abundance of natural resources and of capital to varied opportunities for direct self-employment. The relative scarcity of labor does not, necessarily, imply an actual limitation of numbers. Increase of capital and industrial development are the more normal and desirable means of producing such scarcity. It has been shown by careful statistical inquiry that at least in certain instances where the facts are available the theoretical economists seem to be sustained in their position that real wages rise with the application of additional capital and improved machinery in an industry, and that the concentration of industry results in higher wages, greater continuity and stability of employment, and a shorter working day.¹

Overcrowding of employments, leading to a competition among workers for limited opportunities for employment, a deficiency of

¹ Moore, H. L.: *Laws of Wages: An Essay in Statistical Economics*, Ch. III and VI.

capital, and crude, ineffective industrial organization destroy this sound basis of normal family life. Income under such conditions may be depressed below the level of a living wage and questions may have to be raised as to the necessity for intervention by the state to prevent disaster.

Foreign immigration, migration to cities and towns, the invasion of industry by women, the employment of children in stores, mills and mines, and inventions or changes in mechanical processes which suddenly displace large numbers of laborers, may lead either temporarily or permanently to such overcrowding of existing opportunities for employment as to destroy the possibility of a living wage under unregulated freedom of contract.

Abundance or scarcity of the labor supply, however, is not the only determining factor. Incomes are influenced also by the productivity of labor, which again depends partly on the intelligence, the skill, the muscular strength and nervous endurance, the habits and traditions of the workers. If more is earned for the industry there is more to pay in wages. It does not absolutely follow that it will be paid, but it is certain that without an increase of output and of value an increase of real wages

is ordinarily not to be expected. Industrial training, steadiness in employment, capacity for team work, efficiency in management, prevention of waste, utilization of by-products, sound business methods, the discovery of a full market and the maintenance of stable relations between employer and workingmen are all favorable conditions for that adequate income on which normal family life depends.

The third and final favorable condition for a living wage which we may name on the economic side is such a standard of living, such capacity for enlightened cooperation with others in mutual protection and the promotion of mutual interests as will tend to prevent the lowering of wages or the imposition of unfair conditions. A prosperous industry must always pay reasonable wages if those who are employed in it look intelligently to their interests, and have such a standard of living as removes them from the exploitable class. Where such qualities are lacking, or where temporary abnormal conditions prevail, as in the employment of immigrants in tenement home manufacture, legislative protection may be necessary to maintain minimum wages. But when a living wage and reasonable conditions can be established and maintained as the

result of the independent efforts of workingmen with the voluntary consent of employers, or as the result of any lawful display of the economic strength of employees, that is of course always to be preferred. Where this fails, as we have said, there may be justification for the establishment of a minimum wage by external authority. One method which is now being advocated very generally, and for which there are precedents in England and in some other countries, is the creation of minimum wage boards, on which both employers and wage-earners are represented, with power to determine wages for the particular branch of industry and in the particular district for which they are responsible. It was by an act of Parliament creating such local district boards that the coal strike was settled in England in the spring of 1912. Steps in this direction have been taken in Massachusetts and in Ohio.

Health is quite as important as income. Indeed, one of the principal reasons why an adequate income is important is that without it, under the conditions of modern urban life, health is inevitably endangered. Health is affected by hereditary character and by the influences surrounding infancy and childhood.

Some appear to think that a high infant mortality means that the weaklings are winnowed out and the race as a whole thereby improved. There are several fallacies in such reasoning. In the first place, in early infancy, when most of this winnowing out is supposed to take place, the differences among individuals are acknowledged to be at a minimum. All babies need nourishment, protection, affectionate and watchful care. Without these, infants of the best parentage die easily; with them infants even of doubtful heredity, if they are not born actually diseased, may thrive. No automatic action of an adverse environment operating uniformly will select those whom it is desirable to have live and destroy those who have "undesirable" traits. Moreover, those things which take the lives of the most susceptible, of those who have the least resisting power, may leave upon others a lasting trace in weakened constitution, impaired vitality.

Babies cannot be divided summarily into the fit and the unfit, the strong and the weak, the desirable and the undesirable. They are of all conceivable degrees of fitness, strength and desirability. They have specific traits in all kinds of varying combinations. The unit characters of which particular traits are com-

posed differ in even greater variety. An epidemic of measles may kill some, delay the physical development of others, slightly lessen the physical possibilities of others, and pass over some with no visible result. To avoid the epidemic would keep alive those whose lives are at stake, among whom would be many who will prove to have been inherently strong, fit and desirable individuals; and besides it will raise the average, and add to the strength and fitness of those who seem to be least affected at the time of the disease. Wilbur Wright, who was to conquer the air for man, might have succumbed to an infantile disease as readily as he did in maturity to the preventable typhoid. What is true of epidemics is quite as true of other causes of infant mortality, such as milk poisoning, ignorance of mothers as to the care of babies, sweltering heat in overcrowded tenements, uncleaned streets and the consequent impurity of the air of the towns.

Health is influenced by the occupations and habits of growing children; by their play and their attendance at school; by the attention given to their eyesight, hearing, breathing and digestion, to their spines, and to the arches of their feet, to their position at the desk, and to the type from which their text books are

printed; by the readiness with which they make friends and so enter into the natural sports and exercises of childhood; by the development of their self-control, and their more or less unconscious acceptance of standards of conduct and principles of action which will be their ultimate safeguard against those diseases and weaknesses which come from indulgence of wrong appetites and desires.

Health is influenced at all ages by the early discovery of pathological conditions and the prompt application of appropriate remedies. A brilliant representative of contemporaneous medical teaching in the university and a family physician of long and distinguished career were overheard by a layman discussing with great earnestness whether the sick suffer more from faulty diagnosis or from unskillful therapeutic treatment. The professor seemed to have the better of the argument, though if the patients had been there they would no doubt have pleaded for both accurate diagnosis and skillful treatment, with the complete sympathy of both physicians. The social worker has often to take a considerable amount of trouble to secure for an ailing person that painstaking and thorough examination on which his personal rehabilitation depends. A committee on

the prevention of tuberculosis adopted the wise rule that whenever a person comes to a dispensary or hospital for treatment, there should at once be offered and urged an opportunity for the careful examination of all the other members of the patient's family. Only by such means can the early cases be discovered in time to give a really favorable chance of complete recovery.

Public sanitation has had a very substantial development in recent years. Through state and municipal action of various kinds the death rate at all ages, but especially of infancy and early mature life, can be very greatly reduced. A public health agency which shall effectively control infectious disease, and shall carry on a continuous campaign of education, has now become a part of our ordinary conception of public administration. How much of our present private medical practice is to be taken over ultimately by such a public health agency it would be difficult to predict. At present, the first place in the cure and prevention of disease, in the protection of health from specific dangers, belongs, as it long has, to the family physician in his private practice. The hospital and clinic on the one hand and the public health service on the other are cutting into the

field of this practice, but our appreciation of the value of health, the advance in medical and surgical science, and the discoveries of the laboratory have so enormously extended the total amount of remedial and preventive work to be done as to more than compensate for this loss. The physician of course rightly dominates both the hospital and the public health service, so that the influence of the medical profession both on the private lives of individual patients and on the ideas of social service was never so great as it is today. Social workers on the other hand have come into intimate relations with the medical profession and have already appreciably influenced the attitude of physicians towards such personal, family and race problems as we are considering. The practical advice which may be given to social workers in relation to health is that they should work in close cooperation with physicians both in the treatment of individuals and in the formulation and advancement of public health measures.

On a par with income and health we may name a third essential of normal family life, to which it has already been necessary to make frequent reference. This we may call family solidarity. A sense of responsibility on the

part of parents for the care, education and discipline of children; mutual confidence and affection between husband and wife, strengthened and enriched by increasing acquaintance and increasing common interests and responsibilities; the gradual transformation of the natural dependencies of childhood into an equally natural but voluntary deference, a more conscious appreciation of parental sacrifices and a sense of comradeship within the family circle, transformed again, when circumstances require, into such an assumption of active burdens and responsibilities as includes the maintenance and care of aged relatives; the realization in the life of the individual of all the rich content of family relationships—this even more than health and income determines in the end whether there is or is not a family in the religious and social sense, embracing but not precisely to be identified with a biological unit or an economic group.

The family, in this highest and best interpretation, is created and maintained in large part unconsciously by imitation and suggestion, by a development of habits, instincts and traditions in the family itself. But it may also be striven for by direct, consciously inspired education, and by the encouragement of those

social policies and measures which harmonize with the family ideal. The Church, by its marriage ceremonial, its teachings in regard to chastity, honor to parents, and other pertinent duties, by its constant enforcement of the responsibility of parents for the education of children, and in countless other ways, has always been a mainstay of the family. Settlements, clubs and other social agencies which seek to work on neighborhoods rather than on individuals, are sometimes charged with undermining the solidarity of the family by bringing young people into associations outside the home and perhaps helping to make a breach between the traditions and ideals of children and those of their parents. This, however, is only superficial criticism, or when it is valid is directed towards the activities of agencies which are working under abnormal and exceptionally difficult conditions. When multitudes are suddenly removed from one social environment to another which contrasts strongly with it, there are certain to be such tragedies as we are constantly witnessing in the foreign quarters of American cities. The younger, more alert and more adaptable will, of course, more quickly absorb the customs and standards of the new life. The assimilating agencies

which aid in this process are true socializing agencies even if for the moment they but seem to accentuate the contrasts.

The boys and girls who are aided by settlement, club, Sunday school or playground to develop their latent social qualities will in the end become better sons and daughters, better brothers and sisters, as well as better athletes, club members and Sunday-school scholars. The community is fortunate that has so homogeneous a life that this socializing process may go on within the family, affecting all members at the same time even if not quite equally. Where this is not practicable, it is still desirable to strive directly to improve and strengthen the relation of children to parents and to one another in the same family. We need have no fear that patriotism, team discipline, respect for good leadership, capacity for self-control and other qualities which are developed under the influence of social agencies will not affect favorably also the quality of the home and family life.

Public outdoor relief, i.e., the distribution of money as pensions or otherwise by public authorities, from funds raised by taxation, has been found to have a disastrous effect on family life. It undermines the sense of responsibility

for the welfare of the family on the part of those who are its natural breadwinners. It often continues the appearance of a family without the reality. When support is thus divorced from responsibility, it should be under conditions of constant watchfulness and safeguards against demoralization which experience shows to be not easily secured in the case of public officials spending public funds. Dependence caused by death of the breadwinner, by chronic illness or similar misfortune, should be met by an appropriate form of insurance. The contributions of the insured prevent the evil effects associated with public relief. Exceptional and temporary dependence, for which such a system of insurance cannot provide, should be met by relatives, friends, neighbors or other voluntary resources, and this assistance should be given with such discrimination, personal attention, and under such well-established and carefully considered principles as will prevent pauperization.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER IV

1. What are the objections to "taking in lodgers" as an ordinary means of increasing family income? To child labor? To earning

by the wife? To charitable gifts? To public relief?

2. What determines wages? Is it the productive efficiency of labor, or the standard of living, or the supply of and demand for labor, or the abundance or scarcity of capital? Is the income of wage-earners influenced by the tariff, by trade unions, by industrial education, by governmental regulation of trusts and monopolies, by immigration, by restriction of immigration, by the existence of labor bureaus, industrial commissions, etc.?

3. Discuss the policy of a legal minimum wage.

4. What justification is there for applying the principle of a legal minimum wage to women alone?

5. If the state determines a minimum wage, does it follow that employers will tend to pay only that wage? What is the experience in this respect of Victoria, where there has been a minimum wage law since 1896?

6. What effect will old age pensions, widows' pensions, and state insurance against sickness have (1) on wages, (2) on the social welfare, (3) on the position of the well-to-do?

7. What part may be taken in public health movements by others than physicians?

8. What is the natural division of work between public relief and private charity?

9. Why is insurance preferable to relief?

10. Do you think that under American conditions, if we had a well-developed insurance system to provide for illness, old age, death of breadwinner, and involuntary unemployment, there would be a need for public charitable relief?

SOCIAL CLAIMS OF WOMEN AND
CHILDREN

V

SOCIAL CLAIMS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

We should have come, long before this stage of the discussion, to a clear conception of the family as a real social unit, closely related to all larger societies, although not itself so much a society as a biological entity, a group based upon the eternal laws of life itself; sanctified by religious instinct, tradition and training; fortified by economic advantages and contributing to the material prosperity of the race; and yet modified gradually and inevitably to conform to changing ethical standards, and to permit the realization by its individual members of the fuller and higher individual life which is the ultimate end of the family as of other human institutions.

Now it is useless to deny that in certain of its primary tasks the family has been subjected of late to very severe tests and that it has failed to meet them. Protection in childhood, the inculcation of necessary social habits and economic virtues, the maintenance of mini-

mum standards of sanitation, health, comfort and education; the protection of women from overwork, from physiologically injurious employment, and from any kind of regular work for wages immediately before and immediately after childbirth, and at other periods when there is imperative need of release from the strain of such occupation; and the proper care of aged and infirm persons who are no longer able to work—such are the responsibilities which we have assumed to belong to the family but which the family, under twentieth century conditions, no longer adequately meets, which unaided it probably can not again meet satisfactorily.

The protection of childhood remains, as from time immemorial, the first social obligation of the household. In some measure parents have it in their power to determine whether the child is to perish or to survive; whether it is to be strong and healthy or handicapped by disease and infirmity; whether it is to be illiterate or educated; whether it is to find its natural and appropriate place in industry and to have an opportunity to develop its natural capacities or to be exploited for the gain or convenience of some fellow mortal. Parental responsibility may have to be expressed in new ways but it

remains the main factor in shaping the most flexible and responsive period in the life of the coming generation. To undermine parental responsibility by lightly transferring to the state such natural burdens as heretofore have been cheerfully borne in the home is an obvious temptation and a constant danger. The feeding of school children at public expense; the provision of eyeglasses, shoes, toothbrushes, etc., by school authorities, instead of insisting upon their provision by parents; the assumption of direct responsibility for minor surgical operations and for the correction of physical defects by the public health authorities instead of cooperating with parents and the family physician to have such work done by the authority and at the expense of parents, are illustrations of questionable public policies directed towards ends very desirable in themselves but equally to be attained without relieving parents of the responsibilities which as yet at any rate appear to be inseparable from rational parenthood and family life.

The end must not be obscured by this danger of attaining it through wrong means. After all the health and physical welfare of the child should be conserved. We should not be so unduly impressed by the danger of relieving

parents that we sacrifice the child. Those who have a keen sense of the importance of parental responsibility must be alert to accomplish the desired end by legitimate means or else expect that it will be accomplished by the ways which seem to them objectionable and dangerous. All our religious and social instincts impel us to exalt the claims of childhood. Fortunate is the community in which children are cared for by their own parents; in which social concern for child welfare takes primarily the form of elevating and strengthening the home; in which movements for improved housing, for playgrounds, for pure food, for educational reform, for child labor laws, for children's courts and for the prevention of juvenile delinquency proceed along lines which at every step show an appreciation of child conservation. It is better to save the children through increase of state action than not to save them. We would do wrong to isolate the children; or, by public policies which ignore their having been placed in families, to lift their feet to planes which have no relation to the shoulders of their elders. Our children may indeed be made to stand upon our shoulders, but that is no reason for trying to put them upon the shoulders of an insubstantial chimera formed

though it may be from the mists of the most altruistic imagination.

We repeat, however, that those who feel so must be in the vanguard of the protective child welfare reform movement. Half-starved and undernourished children certainly must be fed. Those whose eyes need glasses must have them. Crooked spines must be straightened, decayed teeth, adenoids and diseased tonsils cared for, the flat foot supported, the wrong position corrected. The employment of children for wages before their time must be stopped. The manufacture of young criminals by the stupid neglect of perfectly well-known principles of probation, reformation and prevention must be recognized as the stupendous social crime which it is. The claim of the child to protection in his childhood, to nurture and to normal growth through an unspoiled adolescence, the inherent and inalienable birth-right of the child born in a prosperous community to a full share in the opportunities which such prosperity implies, will not be denied. The first claim of the child is upon his own parents, but society underwrites the obligation, and if parenthood is bankrupt the community must see that the claim is met. For this reason we have asylums and agencies to provide foster

homes when the natural home fails entirely through orphanage and the lack of suitable substitute care by kindred. We have relief agencies to supply temporary aid when the family is intact but income fails because of unexpected misfortune. We have societies to protect children from cruelty, either that of their own unnatural parents or that of others. We have the church and Sunday school to supplement the home on the religious, moral and social side. We have police systems, prosecuting attorneys, courts, probation officers and the like, all with an especially attentive ear to the claims of children. We have child labor committees to see that there are laws against the premature employment of children, and that those laws are enforced. We have foundations engaged especially in the study of various aspects of child welfare. After many years' effort, we have, at last, a Children's Bureau in the national government, supplementing the Bureau of Education. We have the public school system from kindergarten to college, an immense institution into which society freely pours its resources for the purpose of passing on as completely as possible the accumulated results of civilization. We have settlements and clubs, athletic associations and scores of

more or less definitely organized agencies besides, all expressing more or less clearly the concern which society feels for the success of the child in realizing his heritage.

That, in spite of all these agencies, children fail in innumerable instances to secure the protection to which we acknowledge them to be entitled is naturally a cause for deep discouragement until we reflect upon the substantial progress which has already been made and the comparatively short period in which conscious efforts have been put forward to accomplish this result generally for all the children of men. It is no class struggle but a race struggle in which we are engaged. Not the city child or the child of the well-to-do, not the tenement child or the child of the mountaineer—but the child of the nation now enlists our zeal. The prevention of infant mortality, the instruction of mothers in the care of infants, child hygiene, the removal of the physical defects of school children, the prevention of child labor, the protection of children from cruelty, and the promotion of child welfare are among the most popular of all watchwords of social reform. They are democratic, national, progressive watchwords. They can have their full meaning only in relation to coordinate movements

for the well-being and safeguarding of the family. They will have won their full natural support only when all those who, from any point of view realize the importance of the family, accept them with enthusiasm and determination.

If the modern family is failing to give adequate protection to children from the encroachments of modern industry, and the insidious dangers of the city tenement, it has also failed to protect women adequately in the transitional stage through which we are passing. Any recent discussion of the place of women and girls in modern industrial life¹ will sufficiently demonstrate that along with increased freedom of opportunity there has gone an inexcusable amount of exploitation. Low wages, long hours, lack of the most obvious facilities for refreshment and the temporary relief of the strain of work are ordinary conditions of factory employment. This is not necessarily to say that women are paid less than the actual

1 Clark and Wyatt: *Making Both Ends Meet*. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1911.

Butler, Elizabeth B.: *Women and the Trades*. The Pittsburgh Survey. Published for the Russell Sage Foundation by Charities Publication Committee, New York, 1909.

Goldmark, Josephine: *Fatigue and Efficiency*. Published for the Russell Sage Foundation by Charities Publication Committee, New York, 1912.

value of their labor to their employers. Frequently no doubt they are; but if the consequences to the present and the next generations are injurious the work from a social point of view is unprofitable whether the employer is making an undue profit from it or not. A living wage may make some employments impossible. So much the better. That is at least one means of discovering whether it is the employer or the consumer who is reaping whatever advantage there is from an employment which is resulting in the physical or moral degeneration of the worker. If it is the consumer who has been buying at an abnormally low price because of it, a living wage will raise prices, some workers perhaps being driven out of the unprofitable industry in the process. If it is the employer who has been temporarily making abnormal profits the readjustment may come more easily. In any case we cannot as a rule substitute living wages for exploiting wages without some adjustment of prices and workers. That we must expect. It is the price which is paid for health, reasonable hours, and decent working conditions. A part of that price is the support by some other means of those whose labor is not at the moment worth a living wage. That support may be

only temporary while the worker is gaining some necessary instruction and discipline, or permanent in the case of those who are incurably handicapped. In either case it is less expensive than the support which society gives indirectly by the employment of those who do not earn minimum wages, who are exploitable, and through whom efficient workers are subjected to an unfair and destructive competition.

The revolutionary changes which have taken place in industry at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth have created a demand for the work of women. In the schoolroom and in offices as well as in factory and mill, there is an insatiable demand which shows no sign of diminution. Heretofore women have not been idle and their work has not been without economic value.² That work has been done, however, mainly in the home where the conditions have been favorable for a considerable degree of protection from such injuries as are associated with factory work. The mother and her daughters carried on domestic occupations but they were not mill hands. Their instruments of labor yielded to the physical rhythm of the human

2 Devine: Economic Function of Woman.

body.³ They could sing at their work and they could temporarily lay it aside without stopping an expensive, complicated and dominating machine. In the factory the rigid mechanical movement fixes the rhythm and the yielding human body must adapt itself as best it can. The roaring noise and the furious speed of power-driven machinery replace the fireside music and the tempered action of the simple household implements.

This revolution has gone on so rapidly and is still proceeding at such a pace that few have fully realized its full significance. Already it has come about that young women from sixteen to twenty years of age find employment more readily than their brothers of the same age. They can earn more at the start and if they lose their position can more easily find another. As a result, working girls of this age are becoming the economic mainstay of their family. After the Washington Place fire in New York City in 1911, strong, unmarried Jews and Italians one after another quite unshamefacedly declared that the younger sister whose life had been lost had been the "main support" of aged parents here or in the old country and what they said was found to

3 Goldmark: *Fatigue and Efficiency*.

be true. The good and bad effects of this subverted condition of things are easily seen. The girls develop a sense of family responsibility which is curiously lacking in their brothers, but as the time for marriage approaches the unnatural temporary burden is inevitably laid aside for sons or grandchildren to take up as best they can. The girls cannot replace their fathers and brothers, and still prepare for their own natural functions as wives and mothers. The situation is an impossible one. Rare capacity for self-sacrifice is certainly shown by young women who are forced into such an abnormal position, but the progress of the race is not promoted by such one-sided and abnormal sacrifices. The girls are preferred in part because they learn more easily, and are more skillful in the particular operations demanded; but mainly it is because they will work for lower wages and will submit with less complaint to imposition and arbitrary conditions, and because labor-saving machinery is adapted to this cheaper and more complaisant labor supply. The rising standard of efficiency, a more permanent tenure of work, a living wage according to family needs will lessen relatively the demand for women and increase that for men. There is no adequate ground on which

to prohibit the employment of women and to place any arbitrary limitations on their freedom to enter any occupation for which they are fitted. As to whether they are fitted for any particular occupation they are themselves the best judge.

There is, however, ample evidence that certain kinds of work are always injurious to women, that continuous employment for more than eight hours a day or for more than fifty-four hours in the week is injurious, that opportunities for brief pauses and change of position are of the utmost importance, and that the entire operation of any plant in which women are engaged should be made closely subordinate to human needs and demands.

This is not the place to discuss the relative advantages and disadvantages of the employment of women in general or the conditions in detail which have led to the invasion of industry by women, or again the changes which seem likely to restore a more normal balance. We are concerned only with the assertion of the principle that society is interested in the conservation of women and in establishing such standards of protection as will prevent exploitation. We cannot afford that girls be deprived of the capacity for motherhood in

order that they may support themselves or others by their labor. We cannot afford that health be undermined by overwork. Industry which engulfs girls as well as boys must become humanized industry. Neither for the sake of low prices nor for the sake of high profits can we permit health to be broken down, character threatened, and wholesome family life made impossible.

The way out is only in part through more protective laws and a more efficient administration of factory acts. The solution lies in large part in the education of boys and men. If we are coming into an era in which the factory will compete for the work of women, it is all the more necessary that young men who wish to remain at the head of a household shall be able to offer reasonable inducements to the young women whom they wish to have associated with them in the home. To the normal woman the position of wife and mother is generally not inherently less but more attractive than that of factory operative, office assistant or professional worker. But those who have tasted the satisfaction of independence and of doing in the world some definite work for which there is an economic demand will not readily accept a position of

economic inferiority and dependence. A new type of partnership based upon mutual recognition of a contribution by each to the family welfare must replace the idea that the wife is "supported" by her husband. The sacrament of marriage is not impaired but rather made more significant by this discovery that woman in the home supports quite as much as she is supported. Chivalry has always been ready to impute a certain mystical service to the wife, and religion has amply celebrated the abstract claims of motherhood. It is a different matter, however, when the workingman or office clerk who has arrived at the age of marriage finds himself constrained to propose that the woman of his choice shall forego a wage or salary actually or prospectively equal to his own in order to accept the responsibility for directing the expenditure of his modest income. Among the results are deferred marriage, the continuance of employment after marriage by the wife, excessive limitation of the number of children, and the lowering of the standard of living. The first two of these results may be beneficial in some instances but may easily be carried to very undesirable extremes. The second two are clearly undesirable. There is a better solution, viz., the increase of energy and

earning power of men so that they can successfully compete in the office and the factory. This is the eternally natural road to progress to which a temporary delay of marriage, or the temporary employment of wives may lead if there is no other more immediate approach. The income for the family should normally be earned by the man but it should be sufficient to enable the family to realize its normal standard of living. It should be enough to satisfy fully the natural claims of wife and children. The resources of the family do not consist merely of the man's wages but of his earnings plus the equal or greater resource which lies in the wife's direction of the household, her spending of the income, her contribution to the rearing, education and nurture of children and to the welfare, comfort and happiness of the entire household. All this may be quite compatible in exceptional instances with her leading in addition an independent business, industrial or professional life. It may be sound judgment for her to spend some hours each day in outside occupation. That is a personal matter to be decided according to the circumstances of particular families. What is essential is to recognize that when this is not done, when all

the deepest interests of the wife center in the household itself, any rational valuation of her work in the home makes her still an economic partner and supplies a motive to the husband which other men do not have for hard work, temperate habits and any other conditions necessary to the earning of an adequate income to replace what the wife might earn—the income which under present conditions is virtually held before her as a constantly present alternative to her household occupation.

A full recognition of the social claims of women and children therefore brings us to a recognition of the corresponding duties of husbands, brothers and sons. Surely it is not tolerable that women and children shall lack protection; that they shall be forced into industry to replace men, that the family shall be threatened in its most vital relations, those of the mother and her children, and of the father as income producer and protector for the household. We do not know what changes in our present conception of the family the future may have in store; but of this we may be certain, that if it does not fully protect the social claims of women and children, some new form will be devised which will have at least that elementary merit.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER V

1. What are the social and religious aims of the institution of the family?

2. In what respects and for what reasons does the family most frequently fail to attain those aims?

3. Describe a minimum standard of parental care which should be legally enforced.

4. Describe the higher standard of parental care which we might seek to have enforced by public opinion and personal influence.

5. Is there any logical division of responsibility between the state and the family in providing for the physical needs of children? If so, does the supply of (1) eyeglasses, (2) meals for school children, (3) medical attention, (4) vocational advice, fall primarily upon the state or upon parents?

6. What are the functions of the recently established Children's Bureau at Washington?

7. Would it be of advantage if definite economic value could be attached to the ordinary work of the wife and mother in the home? Is it fair to say that the death of the wife ordinarily reduces by one half the income of the family?

8. What are the particular injuries of the modern factory against which girls and women especially need to be protected?

9. Are there adequate grounds on which to justify special legislation for the protection of women?

10. What is the attitude of religion on the limitation of the size of families? Is the greater danger in the direction of "race suicide," or in the direction of bringing into the world children for whom adequate nurture is not forthcoming?

INEFFICIENCY AND DESERTION

VI

INEFFICIENCY AND DESERTION

Every personal weakness and folly, every adverse social condition against which those who strive for personal rehabilitation have to contend, stands also in the way of wholesome family life. Inefficiency and shiftlessness, a defective organization of industry, infectious disease, an obsolete system of courts and jails, and overwork of wage-earners, men, women and children, are all destructive of the family as of the individual. It is most often in the family, and in their bearing on the welfare of the family as a whole, that these and like problems are actually encountered. Divorce and family desertion, a lack of proper guardianship, making necessary the removal of children, bad housing conditions, congestion of population, and a low standard of living, are even more obviously family as distinct from individual problems.

Inefficiency, from which the family suffers most of all and which we may take as the extreme example of those handicaps which are commonly regarded as strictly personal, is

popularly supposed to be the most hopeless of shortcomings. Against stupidity we are solemnly assured the gods themselves are helpless. With this stupid and superficial generalization the modern social worker has little sympathy or patience. Inefficiency, like disease or poverty or any other obstacle to rational living, has its explanation and its point of attack. It requires first of all interpretation and analysis. Some inefficiency is due to specific disease or physical defect, furnishing a problem for the medical profession, it may be for bacteriological research. Again it may be due to congenital mental defect, which may indeed be incurable in the individual, but which at any rate we need not permit to be passed on as an evil heritage to the next generation. The lack of adequate motive, of a motive which can be intelligently grasped and held steadily and continuously, explains much apparent inefficiency. Scientific management with its immediate and obvious rewards to efficiency offers one of numerous ways in which such a lack can be supplied. Once the ambition is stirred, and habits of conscious effort formed, even chronic inefficiency may thus be overcome. An adequate motive may transform a routine clerk into a capable manager. Quite as easily it may

transform a plodding and exploited toiler into an efficient worker. Again the ownership of property produces similar magical results. Family affection and responsibility constantly repeat the miracle. The problem is to supply such a motive in youth, preferably as part of an educational system, while habits and character are in their most formative stage. Thus we come to the two chief causes of inefficiency, deficiency in family discipline and an incomplete and antiquated educational system. A clerical and professional tradition still influences too much our elementary and secondary education. Vocational schools are coming into existence, but they are still rare and the idea must be pushed with boldness and vigor. If those who oppose industrial education would offer as an alternative a rational scheme of education for culture, one which would bring boys and girls to a real appreciation and enjoyment of books, of music and art, of human society, of animals and plants, of the myriads of beautiful and interesting things in the world, they would be in a stronger position and would be intelligently representing at least one half of the aim of a reasonable educational system. Industry and education should come together, as Dr. C. Hanford Henderson says, on educa-

tion's terms.¹ The efficiency which education should foster is not to be directed primarily towards employers' profits. Efficiency, nevertheless, is a legitimate goal of education. Its twofold object may be most simply stated as capacity for useful work and capacity for genuine enjoyment. The traditional curriculum is deficient in both directions. The enrichment of the courses of study, and the development of alternative courses, have the beneficial effect of meeting diverse needs, and thus arousing adequate motives in those to whom the traditional discipline, fitting especially for clerical positions and even for those inadequately, does not effectively appeal.

Inefficiency, then, is to be broken up, like any other complex problem which we have mistakenly assumed to be simple and unmanageable. Its nature in the particular case is to be studied and an appropriate remedy discovered. Regarded as a social phenomenon it is to be dealt with chiefly by physicians of the nobler sort, who have imagination and invention, by teachers of like qualities and by parents, older brothers and sisters, and all others who have an influence in shaping character in the home.

1 Pay Day, Ch. 7.

Certain economic and social aspects of our problem of family rehabilitation must be reserved for separate treatment. One symptom of family disintegration, viz., family desertion, may be discussed briefly here; and, as in the case of inefficiency, we are warranted in replacing the very superficial and pessimistic current opinions regarding it by an attempt to indicate its extent, to understand its nature, and to seek appropriate and sensible remedies.

From eight to ten per cent of the families that ask for assistance from organized charities, so far as their records have been studied for light on this subject, appear to be in need chiefly because the male head of the family has run away from his normal responsibilities. This is based on a count of those who are not only failing to support their families, but have actually gone away from them, usually to parts unknown. Practically those who remain with their families but do not support them and even more those who are themselves supported by wife or children, are equally deserters, and if these are added the number of such "desertion" and "non-support" cases will account for much more than ten per cent of the dependence with which relief agencies have to deal. Of course in these as in other families other adverse con-

ditions such as intemperance, overcrowding, inefficiency, industrial displacement, low standards of living, are also likely to appear. Those vagrant husbands and fathers who are not with their families undoubtedly make up a part, how large a part we do not know, of the homeless men for whom meals and lodgings are supplied in their own or in other cities. If those who give meals and lodgings to homeless men realized that they were often in effect subsidizing family desertion they might more frequently consider that some degree of discrimination is advisable, even in so simple a matter as supplying shelter and food.

If we take only the superficial and it may be exceptional circumstances of particular instances into account, it will appear that this man deserted his family because he could not get on with his parents-in-law, the next because his wife was a poor housekeeper or had a raucous voice, the next because he was discouraged about finding work and could not bear to see his family suffer or apply for aid, and the next because he has discovered the sad truth that he is really of no use in his family circle, or that they can do better without him.

Looking critically at the conditions in which

deserted families are left and at such facts as can be gleaned from the case records of relief agencies in regard to the deserters, the picture drawn by Miss Brandt from her study of five hundred and seventy-four deserters and their families in 1905 remains substantially correct:²

The typical deserter is not a figure to excite admiration. He is young, able-bodied, more or less dissipated, capable of earning good wages, but rarely in the mood for making the exertion, and, above all, he is lacking in the quality which makes an obligation to others outweigh considerations of personal comfort or preference. This combination of characteristics makes him susceptible to attractions of various sorts; it incapacitates him for dealing in a philosophic spirit with the elements of discord which exist in every household; and it prevents him from resisting with even an average will the restlessness that is apt to call every one at times away from the ordinary prose of life.

The typical deserted family consists of a wife and two or three small children. The wife is a woman with no special preparation for any phase of life, but as far as her knowledge and resources allow she does her part toward making the home what it should be. Frequently she is compelled to be the main support of the family. Both health and disposition show the effects of the hardships of her married life. By the time her husband deserts, five or six years after marriage, the discipline she has had from his irregu-

2 Family Desertion, pp. 63-64.

larity in providing necessities and from his drunkenness and other bad habits, has left its mark in failing strength and in a quick or sullen temper or a habit of "nagging" or complaining which undeniably detracts from her charm as a constant companion.

There is no basis for a composite photograph of the children in these families. Occasional mention is found of epilepsy, feeble-mindedness or physical defect. It seems almost impossible that children with such men as these for fathers, and with such an environment as these homes supply, should have a normal degree of either physical or moral health.

Examples can be found of other styles of deserters and deserted families—types that lend themselves more readily to the employ of rhetoric and arouse more ardent interest—but they do not, so far as this study reveals, form any considerable portion of the problem of desertion with which charitable organizations have to deal. There are deserted wives of such a character that they can receive no sympathy when they are abandoned. There are also unfortunate victims of circumstance, devoted to their families, but unable to find work, who go away with the honest motive of making things easier for wife and children. It is the part of the charitable public to correct the mistaken hypothesis on which such men act. It is mistaken, for it will surely be increasingly true that any man who is anxious and willing to support his family will find sympathy instead of severity, and help in getting into a self-respecting relation with the industrial system. The rational policy would be to give whatever assistance is needed to the man who has the courage and manli-

ness to face the difficult situation, but to hesitate long before smoothing the way of the man who runs away from it by providing liberally for his family.

The deserted family in need of assistance may sometimes have to be aided quite as liberally as that of a widow or of a family in which the wage-earner is disabled by chronic illness. The essential difference is that the primary obligation in the case of a deserted family is ordinarily to find the deserter and to bring home to him the elementary obligation to support his wife and children. Laws for this purpose exist in all states, abandonment of children at least being everywhere recognized as a punishable crime. Even if the deserter has gone to another state he can be extradited, although this may involve considerable trouble and some expense which public officials may be slow to incur unless the wide extent and disastrous consequences of the habit are clearly made known to them. Both the statutes and the administrative practice as to the apprehension and treatment of deserters have much improved in the six or seven years since the matter began to receive serious consideration. Especially efficient has been the procedure of some of the local Jewish charities in following up this class of offenders, and the National

Conference of Jewish Charities has coordinated these efforts by establishing a national Desertion Bureau through which they cooperate. William H. Baldwin has published a comparative study of the laws on this subject and has outlined an appropriate statute of which the efficacy, as in all similar laws, depends rather upon the strict and persistent enforcement than upon its severity. We should be able to rely, in overcoming this grave evil, on the intelligent cooperation of charitable societies, children's institutions, churches, public relief agencies, and courts of justice, especially upon that of the domestic relations courts, which have been established in some cities largely for this very purpose, and what will perhaps be even more effective, upon the assistance of employers, labor unions and the trade press.

These, however, are repressive and only indirectly educational measures—necessary, but in themselves incomplete. For the more fundamental remedy we must look again to the forces which strengthen the family and through the family strengthen society at its foundations. The development of a sense of responsibility, of an appreciation of the value of the possessions which are associated with perma-

nent and stable family life, sound family instincts derived at first hand from families in which they are the treasured heritage from generation to generation—these are the only ultimate protection against the virus of reckless irresponsibility. Everything which affects favorably the family standard of living should naturally contribute to its stability. But the very center and mainstay of the family is something different from the goods which it possesses and even from the ideals which it consciously seeks to realize. This something is an essential element in character; it is “the discipline through which each generation learns anew the lesson of citizenship that no man can live for himself alone.”

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VI

1. What is the test of economic efficiency? Of social efficiency? Of efficiency in the family relation?
2. What are some of the causes of inefficiency in wage-earners?
3. By what means may inefficiency in the individual be overcome?
4. How are we to deal with such ineffi-

ciency as is due to the choice of a wrong occupation and other similar maladjustments?

5. Should education be primarily for efficiency in work or for rational enjoyment of life?

6. Discuss the statement that desertion is the poor man's divorce.

7. To what extent should we compel a man by law to return to a family which he has deserted? To what extent should we encourage a deserted wife to compel his return or to welcome him after repeated desertions?

8. What are the more usual motives for desertion?

9. What difference should be made, if any, between a deserted family and that of a widow in giving relief?

10. On what do you rely in the last analysis to prevent family desertion?

THE PROBLEM OF THE SUBNORMAL

VII

THE PROBLEM OF THE SUBNORMAL

The care and support of the insane, feeble-minded and epileptic, the acutely ill, the seriously defective, and the criminal have become a first charge upon the social surplus. Each class presents its own difficult and unsolved problems. Whatever progress we may be so fortunate as to make in reducing the number in these various groups of dependents, there is still every justification for devoting our best skill and generous financial resources to the care of those who cannot or for reasons of social defense must not be allowed to care for themselves, to giving whatever discipline, education, training, or special attention may be appropriate to their several needs. Prevention is, of course, to be preferred, but there is nothing incompatible between prevention on the one hand and humane and wise care of those now in need on the other. Those who ask that money now spent in relief be diverted to preventive efforts are making a singularly inappropriate and ungenerous appeal. Let them ask if they like for money now spent in

wasteful or luxurious ways, or let them ask for greater energy and wiser economy for the supply of the funds that they require, but let them not seek to rob the afflicted and the suffering of the charitable assistance now bestowed upon them by a charity which is kind and a humanity which is just. More and not less time, effort and money are required for the care and cure of the sick, for the support of the disabled and infirm, for the education and custodial care of the mentally defective, and for the discipline, reformation or segregation of offenders against social order.

The most difficult task in family rehabilitation, however, arises not in the case of the epileptic, feeble-minded and insane, the acutely ill and the seriously disabled. For all these there are hospitals or appropriate institutions, or when such facilities are inadequate, as they often are, or badly administered, we know at least what is necessary and can work to bring it about. Even in the case of reformatories and prisons, where performance falls farthest short of knowledge and theory, there are many capable leaders to show the path to be taken. We have now to consider a problem which is much less understood than those of the hospital, the colony for defectives, or the reforma-

tory, puzzling and unsolved as many of those problems still are.

Industrially and in the use of income very many who do not in the least belong among the naturally dependent fail to attain the elements of a normal, rational standard of living, only because they are unable to withstand the abnormal and unreasonable pressure to which they are subjected, because they are unable to overcome obstacles which have been put in their way. They are not defective in average intelligence, they are not inherently incapable, but they are nevertheless leading subnormal lives. They do not find themselves fully able to cope with the environment in which they have been placed. They play a losing game because they do not have a square deal and have not the exceptional shrewdness and power of assertion to discover and correct the injustice from which they suffer.

These are the poor in the proper sense of that term. By the poor we do not mean the sick, the degenerate, or the criminal. We do not mean the unadjusted immigrant, the victim of industrial accident or disease, or the physically disabled. Any of these may be poor because of their misfortune or their fault; but the poor who are with us always, the poor

whose destruction is their poverty, are rather those who are scarcely if at all below the line of normal intelligence and of social conduct, but who nevertheless do not earn, or, if they earn, do not receive quite enough to live on. They are not abnormal, but in the net result they are subnormal. They may have many virtues but they are not on a sound economic basis. They are not degenerate, but they are nevertheless in need of regeneration. They need not be eliminated but if they are to hold their own they must be more or less transformed. They appear in the rôle of social debtors, along with the groups who must be carried by others, rather than in that of citizens in full standing of the industrial and social community. To their prosperous relatives and neighbors they are a standing problem. To the charitable agencies they come occasionally; oftener to pawnshops and loan sharks, to landlords asking for an extension of time for the payment of rent, and to dealers asking for credit; but mainly the deficiency in their income takes the form of such actual privation of comforts and necessities of life, such overcrowding and underfeeding and lack of recreation as will eventually tell on the health and character of the present and future generations.

Now one of the first conditions of real progress in any community is the driving of a sharp wedge between these subnormal wage-earners and such as are fully capable of earning and securing a living wage. The principle of a living wage does not imply that employers shall be forced to pay such a wage to subnormal persons who are not capable of earning it, whose labor is not worth to their employers as much as it costs for the workman and his family to live. The great advantage of recognizing and insisting on a living wage is that it makes automatically just such a separation. We become at once aware of the existence of the subnormal workers and become conscious of our distinct and quite different responsibility as to their welfare. We begin to inquire what the reasons are for their lower standards of energy and earning capacity. We begin to count the cost of their partial support which had perhaps been disguised as wages not earned but paid because of the lack of discrimination in the generally low level prevailing before the living wage was established.

As soon as the problem is thus broken up and we are able to consider separately the condition of those who cannot earn a living wage, we find that it is precisely because of their

unfavorable living and working conditions. It is because they are living in insanitary, overcrowded rooms; because in infancy they do not have proper maternal care, sufficient food and appropriate medical or surgical attention; because they go to work for wages at eight or ten years instead of waiting at least until fourteen or sixteen when the bones have sufficiently hardened and the muscles have become more fit for the strain of a day's work; because they have not had a rational education fitting them for the kind of occupation in which they were to engage, or have not entered the kind of occupation for which their education was calculated to prepare them; because they have not had playground and recreational facilities, or an opportunity to make use of them; because there has been no reasonable family discipline and oversight, no spiritual guidance in the critical years of adolescence, no fit opportunity to lay quietly and unconsciously the foundation for those habits of industry, application, cooperation and thrift which are at the basis of a sound economic character. Their parents, exploited by landlords through high rents, by money lenders through extortionate interest charges, by middlemen and speculators through high prices of the neces-

sities of life, and by employers through long hours and low wages, have not been able to provide them with the essential elements of a rational family life, and the results of this deprivation now appear plainly at the age when they would naturally become wage-earners. They can find employment without difficulty at some wages, for employers are greedy for young, pliable and unexhausted workers; but they cannot make favorable terms as to stability and permanency of employment, or as to their future promotion. They enter dead-end occupations, where the possibilities of advancement are speedily exhausted and where wages are not expected to equal the cost of living even for a single individual, much less for a family. If they go into other industries where wages are higher they may find that they are liable to industrial diseases, or that the hours of work are so excessive, or the speed at which they must work so furious as to break down their inadequate physique.

If their childhood had been better protected, if their education had been more effectively directed towards industrial usefulness, if they had begun work at a later age when their nervous and muscular system was fitted for it, if they had been more intelligently directed in

the choice of an occupation, if they had been able to begin on half time, keeping the rest of the day for education and recreation, there would have been a different outcome. At least they would have had a fair prospect of securing a permanent and a continuously improving position. They still might have failed, but they would at least have had a fair chance.

No doubt there are some extraordinarily strong, tough natures who can outlive parental neglect, congestion of population, dirty milk, indigestible food, uncleaned streets, with the resulting contaminated atmosphere, the prevalence of infectious diseases, a mechanical and superficial educational system, multiplied temptations to break the laws and ordinances regarding the use of the streets for lack of other playground, and the laws and regulations as to the selling of newspapers and other financially profitable occupations at kindergarten age. None of these things is necessarily fatal in a given case. Put them all together, however, and we are absolutely assured of a race of subnormal youth. Let them be followed by employment in dead-end occupations in which there are no educational elements, no serious motives to progress and application, and we make assurance doubly sure that we shall have

subnormal adult workers. Add a twelve-hour day, and a seven-day week, irregular casual employment, substandard wages, speeding processes which have no regard to human capacities or nervous strains for which the human system is unprepared, indecent housing, insanitary conditions both in home and in factory and we have an explanation amply adequate to account for subnormal wage-earners without resorting to the theory of deficiencies in their ancestry or their race.

We have already admitted that there are true degenerates and that it is very important that there should be such a careful survey as will enable us to estimate their number, and to provide for their segregation, support and control. But it is tragic beyond the tragedy of such degenerate strains that multitudes who are in no sense degenerate, who are not insane, feeble-minded or defective, should be handicapped and brought to a subnormal condition of life by avoidable social and industrial conditions for which they are not individually responsible, which individually they cannot control, for which society is responsible, and with which only the community as a whole, through the national, state and municipal gov-

ernment, or through well-organized and well-endowed associations, can successfully deal.

The problem of the subnormal then is emphatically not one of elimination. It is rather one of redemption, of racial and social redemption, of such a transformation of industry as will bring to light its humane elements, and keep them forever in the forefront of public knowledge and public policy, of such a reorganization of our social life as will put an end to insanitary housing, preventable disease, child labor, the exploitation of women, and all else that creates handicapped and subnormal workers, of such a rehabilitation of family life as will insure protection in childhood, guidance and opportunity in adolescence, and a fair start in the responsibilities and vocations of adult life. We should not discourage the earning of higher incomes by the capable, and we should realize that the subnormal, who are so because of past mistakes and inadequate social control, must be frankly accepted as entitled to more than they can earn—this not as wage-earners but as human beings, and of course under conditions which will tend to develop their own earning capacity. The problem of the subnormal is one of shouldering the burden of enabling them to live at such a standard as

will lift their children into full independence, and transform as many as possible even of the present generation from social debtors into efficient, fully franchised citizens of the industrial community. On its preventive side, the problem of the subnormal is equally clear. It involves the whole program of social work: housing reform, sanitation, organized charity, recreation, a high standard of living, the enforcement of minimum standards of wages and of industrial conditions.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VII

1. Distinguish between support and maintenance, relief and rehabilitation, and prevention and elimination. Are these distinctions all applicable to work with individuals, as well as to social work?

2. Should we try to divert effort and resources from relief to prevention? If not, where should we seek to get the funds and service needed in preventive movements?

3. What do you understand by subnormal persons? How do they differ from abnormal?

4. What are social debtors and with what others are they to be contrasted?

5. When the subnormal compete with others, what is apt to be the result?

6. Do the subnormal, inefficient and exploitable really earn what they receive? If not, why are they employed? Does the principle of a legal living wage involve the employment of the subnormal at more than they can earn?

7. Does the principle of a legal minimum wage imply that no one is to be expected to earn more than the minimum? What is the difference between the present demand for a minimum wage and the mediæval statutes fixing wages?

8. Is it a practicable ideal to transform a large proportion of the subnormal and social debtors into self-supporting, self-respecting, independent members of the community?

9. By what means may minimum wage standards be established and maintained other than by law?

10. Do you expect to see poverty abolished? If so, in what sense are you using the term poverty?

RESPONSIBILITY AND OPPORTUNITY

VIII

RESPONSIBILITY AND OPPORTUNITY

Two fundamental principles underlie all rational attempts to help individuals who are in trouble. The first of these is the principle of personal responsibility. We cannot act as a kind providence for the poor, as Josephine Shaw Lowell, one of the wisest of all those who have worked disinterestedly for the poor, used constantly to remind us. They must bear the responsibility for their own actions, for their failures, even for their weaknesses. This does not mean that we are to inflict upon them punishments of our own cunning devising. What it means is merely that we must recognize our own limitations. We are to respect them as persons, as Hegel, in a saying recently quoted by the president of Princeton University, bids us to do. If a man takes poison he will be ill or die. If he works efficiently and saves he will prosper. Such are the general laws of nature and of society. There are exceptions to which due attention must be given, but the exceptions are less important

than our appreciation of the importance of the general laws.

Among these laws we must begin with that of the responsibility of the individual for his own welfare. We are not here expressing any opinion as between socialism and the present or any past economic organization of society. Those who have a social point of view must recognize, and do in practice recognize, the principle of personal responsibility, quite as much as the strongest so-called individualist. Indeed, socialists claim that it is only under such a régime as they advocate that the individual will have a full chance to develop his individuality and that the doctrine of personal responsibility can be fully accepted. Taking things as they are, we must begin with the assumption that the development of individuality is desirable. Svengali dominating his Trilby is no prototype for the social worker. We are not to seek to take the control of the lives of others into our own hands. If they are immature, we may protect them until their maturity. If they are ignorant, but willing to learn, we may educate them. If they are in unforeseen danger we may warn them. If they are a menace to others we may restrain them. If they are going wrong we may seek

to persuade them. If they are abnormal, degenerate, irresponsible, we may take them into custody in their own interest and in the interest of society. If, however, they are ordinary normal human beings, the one thing which we should not do is relieve them of the responsibility for shaping their own lives.

Unconscious personal influence and even personal advice are of course among the omnipresent influences in the making of character. This individual who shoulders ultimate responsibility is no isolated Crusoe on his island. He is a member of society, inheriting certain qualities and reacting under an infinite complexity of social influences. Yet he is an individual, nevertheless, with his own personal share, a decisive and inalienable share, in the make-up of his character and his fortunes. If our social philosophy or our charitable instincts are such as to cause us to disregard this principle of personal responsibility, let us expend our sympathy on animals rather than on our own kind—though again the animal psychologist will no doubt be quick to warn us that we are equally out of place in the lower kingdom.

The second principle for the social worker in his relation to individuals is perhaps best expressed in President Eliot's phrase: fit oppor-

tunity in infinite variety. So far as in us lies we are to give every man a fair chance. He is to be held responsible for what he does with his chance, but it is to be a fair chance. It is to be fit opportunity, not limited to some one particular route over which we ourselves, perhaps, or others whom we have in mind as suitable precedents have traveled—but such a fair variety of opportunity as will in one or another of its phases be likely to appeal to the particular ambition, the latent capacity of the individual. Men are not equal and we cannot make them so. We cannot even offer to all precisely equal opportunity. The circumstances of our lives are too varied for that. But some suitable opportunity can be offered to all. We can try now one thing and now another until we have struck a responsive chord. According to the greatness of our resources of imagination and experience, we can put before those who are in misfortune and who wish to retrieve their fortunes such opportunity as they require. Even those who are completely “down and out” at the moment may have recuperative power if a fair chance is given them. But what is a fair chance for one is not for another. We must study our man. We must know our resources. And from a knowledge of men and

resources we must create that fit opportunity, that fair chance, which is the complementary principle of the doctrine of personal responsibility. Neither of these two principles should be preferred before the other. We have named responsibility first, but the second, opportunity, is like unto it. On these two principles hang the whole theory and practice of the rehabilitation of individuals.

Consider the man who lives by odd jobs, having no trade or regular employment. He may be intemperate or merely shiftless and incompetent. He may have some chronic physical ailment. He may come of a bad ancestry or, without any of these handicaps, he may be merely a misfit. The first task of any man to whom he comes for assistance, or who for any other reason comes into serious relation with him, so as to feel a call to be of substantial service to him, is to discover whether he is or is not mentally responsible. If he is, subsequent dealings must be on the ground that he is rational, that there is something to build on, that he will respond to adequate motives, and will ultimately welcome release from any removable burdens that he is carrying. Infinite tact may be necessary to reach that point. Now one approach and now

another may have to be tried, but as a reasonable man he will desire to overcome his bad habits, to have his disease cured or alleviated, to become a more competent workman, or to reach the particular place where he will no longer be a misfit. There will be a natural sequence, different perhaps in each case, in which these problems of the individual man are to be undertaken and solved. One ally after another may have to be summoned. Medical advice, family consultation, an employer's opinion, may or may not in a given instance be advantageous. But shrewd intelligence, genuine sympathy, and persistence must be brought to bear, always under the guidance of the two principles that in the end the man is to have his chance, and that, when he has it, he and no one else is to be responsible for what he does with it: a fair chance, not arbitrarily imposed upon him in some one mechanical form which he can take or leave; decently rather, in sufficiently varied forms to offer a probability of his finding it reasonable and attractive; but after all, his chance, to make the most of, with appreciation on our part if he does so, but with no dictation and no presumptuous interference with his own way of making the most of it.

Such personal rehabilitation in an extreme case may begin in a court, where the victim of some weakness or of misfortune may have come for vagrancy or for some other so-called petty, perhaps in reality very serious, trouble. It may even begin in the workhouse or at the moment of discharge. Oftener it may begin when one is asked for money on the street or wherever some tale of distress is told to secure charitable aid of any kind. Still oftener in the experience of the churches the appeal may accompany the conversion of a sinner, the first open expression of repentance and of a desire to turn from an unworthy life. The right action is to look upon every such appeal as an evidence of the need for personal rehabilitation. The giving of money may be essential, but in itself it is not rehabilitation. That lies in the exercise of sound judgment as to the precise means by which in the given case strength of character is to be developed, and the capacity for self-support.

There are of course two wholly distinct kinds of dependence. There is a normal, mutually advantageous dependence like that of children on parents, of aged parents on their grown children, of the sick on the well members of the family, of the insured on funds to which they

have contributed, of those who have grown old in any particular service on the service to which they have given their working years, or on the savings which earnings in that service have made possible. Society is permeated with such relationships, which are simply evidences of our social solidarity. The more of such interdependence the better.

Very different is the parasitic and abnormal dependence of which almsgiving is the symbol. The beggar, the tramp, the vagrant, the rounder going from door to door, from church to church, from charitable society to charitable society, are in no natural relation of social interdependence. As human beings they must and do appeal to our sympathies, and this is because we see in them something different from what they are. We may look upon a ruined castle with æsthetic appreciation and remain human. If we take a similar attitude towards a human wreck, we may have still some standing as artists but we have ceased to be men. Lightly to give the beggar what he asks is not to make him different but to confirm him in what he is. The helping hand is one thing, the open hand is quite another. One may break the chains; the other rivets them. We are not told by what virtue Lazarus

in the parable is carried to Abraham's bosom, but certainly the fate of Dives offers no encouragement to the indiscriminate dispensing of crumbs without concern for the individual. In this life the relation is one alike disadvantageous to both.

In dealing with the individual, then, the aim is reintegration, as complete a restoration as possible to full standing in the community. This must take account of economics, that is to say, of earning capacity, regularity and permanence of work, good sense in spending, a rational ordering of the economic life as a whole. A motive for hard work, an instinct for saving, a capacity for cooperation, are among the necessary economic assets of the individual who is to earn his living. If these are lacking it is the part of a friend to help to implant them. Reintegration should, however, extend to the social life in all of its normal relations. Neighbors, recreation, an opportunity to enjoy music, books, or pictures, an opportunity to take part in any appropriate way in the informal communal life of the neighborhood may in point of time precede, certainly they should not all wait to follow, complete economic rehabilitation. Treat those who are in trouble as persons; give them again

the chance they have missed; develop their sense of personal responsibility, and as a means of rehabilitation help them, as neighbors, out of their trouble.

The rehabilitation of the individual is, however, not merely a problem for the isolated action of individuals. It involves cooperative community action. The scriptural injunction to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit those who are in prison is not to be fulfilled by the most scrupulous and adequate attention to the stray individual applicant who may happen to present himself at our door. What it signifies, interpreted by the social conscience, is intelligent and active interest in the means by which all those who are hungry or who need any kind of care may receive the attention that their needs demand. It is the efficient, prompt, and humane working of all the social arrangements, public and voluntary, that counts. If there is a municipal lodging house it is to be utilized for the purpose for which it is intended, and citizens who have any feeling of responsibility for the sheltering of the homeless must see to it that it is properly adapted to that purpose; that its management is what it should be; that it is decently and properly performing its function. If there is a hospital

for the sick, the important matter for the citizen is not that through some personal influence he should get a particular patient into it, perhaps at the expense of some other more urgent case in which no one is interested, but that there should be beds enough for all suitable cases, that the standards of treatment and care should be high, its financial resources sufficient, its administration economical and business-like, its relation with educational authorities, with those who are engaged in research, and with the public on a rational, well-considered basis. There is of course a place—a very large place—for personal interest in individuals; but a primary element in the rehabilitation of individuals is the establishment of the necessary agencies for relief and prevention, the efficient management of those agencies, the intelligent use of them by the public, i.e., by private citizens, and cooperation among them to the end that the whole of the community task be accomplished. One of the first duties, therefore, of the man who would really help an unfortunate fellow being is to find out just what provision has actually been made for giving such help. Only by such cooperation can the response which the individual makes to the emotional appeal of human distress be

transformed into a social force equal to the task which is to be performed.

In the case of personal rehabilitation these resources include of course all the official and voluntary organized agencies and all that individuals can be brought to do to relieve, educate, train, discipline and encourage men, women and children, according to their several needs. An orphan home or a placing-out agency, a society for the prevention of cruelty, a social club, or a "big brother" may be the right source of cooperative assistance if it is a child who needs attention. Other things being equal children are to be helped in their own families. If that is not practicable then in a good foster home, if a good one can be secured. An institution conducted on modern principles may sometimes do better by the child than a foster or even the natural home. If the boy has broken the law and is brought to court, a probation officer, acting under the authority of a juvenile court, may establish an influence which becomes a valuable element in his rehabilitation. If there are grave defects of character to be overcome, it may be necessary to apply the continual discipline of a well-managed reformatory. And, unfortunately, there is often no well-managed reformatory at

hand. Resourceful effort may find a substitute, but here, as at almost every point, personal rehabilitation runs quickly to its natural limits, merging into civic responsibility for the creation or reconstruction of the needed institution. The agencies which deal with individuals are legion. Charity organization societies are necessarily more or less closely in touch with all of them, and the best advice that can be given to one who is at his wit's end in regard to an individual problem is to consult that society, if one exists in his community, and if not, to join with others in establishing one.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VIII

1. Why is it impossible and why is it undesirable that we should become a "providence" to the poor? To what extent may we legitimately seek to influence the lives (1) of children, (2) of adults? Is equality a practicable and desirable social ideal? Is equality of opportunity a rational social ideal? Do you prefer President Eliot's ideal of a "fit opportunity in infinite variety"? How are we to decide upon fitness of opportunity?

2. Are inmates of prisons usually persons who have had a fit opportunity and failed to

meet it? Compare, for example, the manner in which college students take advantage of their infinitely varied opportunities.

3. How can we decide whether a person who asks others for aid is or is not mentally responsible and physically normal? What are the so-called Binet tests?

4. In general should we seek out persons who are destitute and in trouble to help them, or should we wait for them to apply?

5. How does rehabilitation differ from relief giving?

6. Distinguish between normal and parasitic dependence.

7. Why is it an elementary ethical obligation to treat a human wreck as a person, rather than as a picturesque ruin?

8. What is the social form of the obligation to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and visit those who are sick and in prison?

9. Is it true that "even a bad institution is better than a good home"?

10. Where would you turn for practical advice as to how to start a charity organization society? What kind of people would you seek to interest if called upon to organize such a society?

COORDINATION OF SOCIAL WORK

IX

COORDINATION OF SOCIAL WORK

We may now define social work as embracing all those efforts which are consciously and deliberately undertaken in any community for the improvement of living and working conditions. Whether public or private, whether organized or individual, whether embodied in some definite movement with its headquarters, paid staff, printed propagandist literature and other familiar means of influencing public opinion, or still in the shape of sporadic personal action, we can readily recognize the underlying motive and the guiding spirit of social work. Some of its most characteristic exponents are in public office, working with the resources of the state or the municipality. Others are in the churches and in the religious and fraternal associations. Still others are officers or workers in philanthropic institutions and in educational or civic bodies. Some are in business, others in journalism, others in private life. If they are working proportionately to their strength and vision for the promotion of the common welfare, the removal of social ills, and the realization of a fuller,

higher and more complete life for their fellow men, then they deserve recognition whatever their occupation or the medium through which they choose to work; and, wherever their lines may be cast, they will gain by recognizing on their part a kinship with the large fraternity of social workers of similar aims and aspirations.

There have been founded schools of philanthropy for the professional training of social and civic workers, that is, of those who wish to make definite preparation for useful service as secretaries, superintendents, visitors or members of charity organization societies, social settlements and other agencies of social improvement; or in the civil service as probation officers, tenement inspectors, social workers in hospitals and the like; or as parish visitors and pastors' assistants; or as volunteer members of boards and committees of institutions and societies. These schools are usually affiliated with universities on the one side and with the practical work of social and civic agencies on the other.¹

Several social movements have their special

¹ The New York School of Philanthropy; the Boston School for Social Workers; the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy; the St. Louis School of Social Economy, etc.

journal, some of them, like the health movement, more than one, devoted to the discussion of pertinent questions and the recording of current progress in the particular field to which they are devoted. *The Survey*,² a weekly journal of constructive philanthropy, covers the general field of charitable, civic and social work, naturally in less detail than some of the specialized periodicals but with monthly departments for each of the more important subjects, such as health, housing, civics, industry, the delinquent, and social agencies, and with special emphasis on the interpretation of all social movements and needs to the general reader. Nearly all of the great universities and many of the colleges now offer courses in social economy, or if not under that name, then in economics, sociology, or some related department, which deal more or less comprehensively with such subjects as we have briefly considered in this volume. Even more significant than such distinct courses, however, is the new spirit of social and civic responsibility which underlies all higher education. This is not to be confused with a utilitarian spirit, or with any tendency to disparage what are known as cultural studies. The higher

2 Published at \$2.00 a year, New York and Chicago.

service of humanity demands acquaintance with the history of civilization, with the content of the great literatures and of art, quite as much as familiarity with engineering, sanitation, politics, statistics, economics and the practical arts.

What is distinctive in the new view of science and of the humanities is its democracy, its recognition of the common right of all men to a share in culture, to participation in the prosperity and progress of which letters are but one among many manifestations. The new art is not a hothouse exotic produced by a servile few for a privileged class of dilettanti, but a vigorous growth sending its roots deep and wide into the national life. The new university is not a select academy in which a narrow tradition of learning is passed like a secret ritual from high priest to neophyte, but, as President Butler has said, a genuinely national institution, looking "the problems of today straight in the face" and bringing "to their solution wisdom, sanity, and courage."³

The social worker is one who succeeds in coordinating the knowledge and the available material from every department of the uni-

3 Devine: *Efficiency and Relief*. Columbia University Press. Introduction by Nicholas Murray Butler.

versity or from any other source and applies it successfully to any of the practical problems of politics, business, education or philanthropy in such a way as to raise the standards of life, or, as will more frequently be possible, in such a way as to enable any individual, or any group of individuals to realize the standards to which we have already attained.

The first result of accurate personal acquaintance with adverse social conditions is almost certain to be depressing. Any generous and sensitive person may be expected to experience a revolt of righteous indignation on learning for the first time what is really meant by some kinds of factory life, or by living in a tenement flat in a congested city block. Pressing a little further into either tenement life or factory work there may easily come a fierce conviction that nothing except a complete industrial revolution which shall utterly demolish the existing institutions of society, or perhaps even some process of annihilation which will sweep away oppressed and oppressor alike, as the wrath of the Lord destroyed the contemporaries of Noah, will ever sufficiently clear the way for the rational social order of which we still feel that men are surely capable. There are some who from such

a stage of revolt and revolution speedily relax into a far more anti-social attitude of disillusionment and pessimism, a passive acceptance of the situation, bad as it is, as the altogether natural expression of the real human nature, an acquiescence in a condition of things in which the weak are exploited, the subnormal and handicapped left to suffer, the poor destroyed by their poverty, normal standards of living realized only by those who are fortunate enough to share in privilege and to be protected by fortune.

These are all abnormal states of mind intelligible enough as transitional states, but as chronic attitudes quite unworthy of any sane, well-balanced students of social conditions and real friends of man. Without shrinking from the most honest and courageous attempt to understand things as they are, without hesitating to push the analysis of that which is seen and learned as far as any powers of the mind will permit, without underestimating the difficulties to be encountered whether they lie in the economic arrangements, in social customs, in the political mechanism, in bad traditions or in unjust laws and privileges, it is still quite possible to remain rationally optimistic and confident.

Those who work steadily and intelligently at any of the numerous problems of social work, such as improved housing and sanitation or the rehabilitation of families, are almost inevitably led in time to a realization that the particular evil against which their efforts have been directed, however serious or however distinctive it may have seemed, cannot be dealt with by itself. Drunkenness, immorality, overcrowding, inefficiency, low standards of living, and poverty—all are inextricably interlaced. It matters little at what corner the problem is attacked. Quickly one comes to all the other aspects. But the reverse is always true. Wherever the veil is lifted, there light streams in and the spell of darkness is broken. Religion, education, philanthropy, health, income, higher standards of living, efficiency—these break the vicious circle and a healthy, invigorating succession of redemptive forces begin their work.

We find that conservatively inclined people are often willing to admit that preventable disease, overwork, congestion of population, alcoholism, feeble-mindedness, and glaring defects of the educational and penal systems are worthy of more serious and persistent attention than they are as yet receiving. They are will-

ing, perhaps, to join some one or two of the specific campaigns and to take a mildly sympathetic interest in others. The difficulty is, that they do not expect any large result from their efforts, at least within a period which has direct interest to the present generation. Their faith is small and their vision is limited.

On the other hand, radically minded persons are often willing to join, sometimes a little grudgingly, in such remedial measures, protesting that they are of course merely "palliatives"; stop-gaps, as it were, until the panacea comes. Their vision also is limited, although in a different way, limited perhaps to a distant or at least to a revolutionary conception, in which the actual release of living human beings from the particular handicaps and hardships from which they suffer has little or no place. Their faith also is small in the efficacy of the measures at which they work with others merely because they must do something until the panacea comes.

Now there is no occasion to change conservative people into radicals or radical people into conservatives. But there is much occasion to increase the faith of both radicals and conservatives in the measures to which theoretically and in practice both are united, and to

clarify their vision of that better Kingdom, or as we may well prefer to say of that better democracy which is at hand; and of which both radicals and conservatives, if they are socially minded, are potentially natural-born citizens. Certainly it will increase the faith and clarify the vision of the people as to the seven curses which have just been named, to the removal of which and of others like them, many noble persons have now consecrated their lives, to realize the unity of all social endeavors and to recognize their ultimate goal in the abolition of poverty.

It is scarcely necessary to enumerate once more the means to the abolition of poverty, for we have had to come back to them in almost every chapter. Protect women and children. Forbid excessive speeding and overwork, make labor efficient but subordinate machinery to the needs of the human system. Stamp out mental degeneracy by segregating and humanely caring for the feeble-minded. Put an end to overcrowding and insanitary housing. Organize a strong and effective campaign against inebriety. Give the public health service a dollar a year for every inhabitant and then hold it responsible for controlling infection, and for the successful education of the public in mat-

ters relating to the public health. Stop creating subnormal and handicapped candidates for industrial exploitation. The means are many but they are related. The program of social work is diversified, but one in method and in spirit. The national legend, *E pluribus unum*, may be translated: From many campaigns against specific causes of poverty, one victory—the early and complete abolition of poverty.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER IX

1. Define social work. Who is a social worker?
2. Is social work a profession? Is social economy a science?
3. What is the scope of *The Survey*? Of the School of Philanthropy? Of the National Conference of Charities and Correction?
4. Is social work correctly described as a palliative? As an insurance against revolution? As a salve to an uneasy conscience? As disguised socialism? As applied religion?
5. Describe the interrelation of different kinds of misery and injustice.
6. Are you ready to enlist definitely in a campaign for the abolition of poverty?

7. Does your religion impel you to counsel patience under the burden of poverty or righteous indignation against it? Or both?

8. Formulate a constructive social program for your local church, for your city, for your state, for the nation, for the universal Church militant.

9. At what age and by what means should we seek to interest children in social conditions and problems?

10. What part of your income and what part of your time should be given to the community?

APPENDIX

**NOTE:—The books in the following
list may be obtained at prices
noted by addressing SURVEY
ASSOCIATES, Inc., 105 East 22d
Street, New York.**

APPENDIX

REFERENCES

The Bible.

(Especially the Books of Ruth, Job, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Malachi, The Sermon on the Mount, the Thirteenth Chapter of First Corinthians, and the Epistle of James, together with any other selections which especially emphasize self-sacrifice, service, social responsibility, regeneration and redemption. The community ideal presented in the closing chapters of Revelation is especially suggestive.)

Social Aspects of Religion.

Under this general heading the Harvard University Guide to Reading in Social Ethics and Allied Subjects (published by Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., 1910) gives a long list of historical studies and practical discussions, books on Religious Education, the Social Teaching of the Old and the New Testaments and Christian Missions, with critical notes by Francis G. Peabody and others. The student is advised to consult this Guide. Among the numerous books which have been issued since the Guide was published, special mention may be made of Batten, Samuel Zane, *The Social Task of Christianity*. 1911. \$1.25.

Patten, Simon N. *The New Basis of Civilization and The Social Basis of Religion*. 1911. \$1.00.

These two books present in an original and strik-

ing way the general point of view that social work is essentially religious, that the vital element in Christianity is not sacrifice but service, that the socializing of religion is not a project for the future but a process already well under way, that "sin is misery; misery is poverty; and the antidote of poverty is income."

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Beyond Good and Evil*.
Translated by Helen Zimmern. 1911.
\$1.25.

A vehement attack upon Christian religion and morality and an exposition of the doctrine of the superman. Not the spirit of service but the "will to power" is the inspiration of this "prelude to a philosophy of the future." Nietzsche's superman is not viewed socially; but, in Professor Patten's language, is a "self-centered egotist who moves up through the elimination he creates." Nietzsche's books, notwithstanding their abhorrent doctrines, are useful as indicating the goal towards which a materialistic eugenic philosophy, unrestrained by the Christian ideal of service, would inevitably lead.

Howard, George Elliott. *The History of Matrimonial Institutions*. 3 vols. 1904.
\$10.00.

In the Harvard Guide, Professor Peabody describes this work as "a monumental and indispensable study of the origins and development of the family, its relation to Christian teaching, and the tendencies of legislation in the United States." An exhaustive bibliographical index is appended.

Bosanquet, Helen. *The Family*. 1906. \$2.75.

Marriage and Divorce. 1867-1906. Special Report of the Department of Commerce and Labor. Government Printing Office. Washington. 1908-09.

Contains statistics of marriage and divorce in all states and territories.

Thomson, J. Arthur. *Darwinism and Human Life*. 1909. \$1.50.

Six lectures introductory to the study of evolution problems.

Bateson, W. *Mendel's Principles of Heredity*. 1909. New edition in press.

Described by Thomson and Geddes as the "most important statement of what has been achieved by the experimental study of genetics."

Davenport, C. B. *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics*. 1911. \$2.00.

With full bibliography and a plea for state eugenic surveys and a clearing house for hereditary data.

Bergson, Henri. *Creative Evolution*. Translated by Arthur Mitchell. 1911. \$2.50.

An original evolutionist philosophy the effect of which on those who are attracted by it is compared by the Hibbert Journal with that of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason when it first appeared.

Galton, Francis. *Natural Inheritance*. 1889.

Out of print, but available at libraries.

An important classic. Applies statistical methods to study of inheritance.

Geddes, Patrick, and Thomson, J. Arthur.

Evolution. A small work in the Home University Library, with a bibliography. 1911. 50 cents.

Seager, Henry R. *Economics*. Briefer Course. 1909. \$1.75.

A text book intended especially for technical and professional courses and for those who can give only that amount of attention to economic theory that is essential to the intelligent discussion of practical economic problems. Any of several other texts, such as those of Seligman, Fetter, Ely, Taussig, may of course be substituted.

Ryan, J. A. *A Living Wage*. 1906. \$1.00.

Reports and publications of such bodies as the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis, the National Child Labor Committee, and the American Association for the Study and Prevention of Infant Mortality.

Annual reports of Charity Organization Societies.

Economic periodicals, official reports of Federal and state commissions dealing with the condition of labor, health, housing, etc.

Devine, Edward T. *The Economic Function of Woman*. 1910. 15 cents.

The Practice of Charity, 1901. New Edition, 1904. 60 cents.

Principles of Relief. 1904. \$2.00.

Efficiency and Relief. 1906. 75 cents.

Misery and Its Causes. 1909. \$1.25.

Social Forces. Reprint of twenty-five editorials from *The Survey*. 1910. \$1.25.

The Spirit of Social Work. 1911. \$1.00.

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